DAVID JACKSON



A HISTORY OF TIBETAN PAINTING

VERLAG DER ÖSTERREICHISCHEN AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN

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PHILOSOPHISCH-HISTORISCHE KLASSE
DENKSCHRIFTEN, 242. BAND

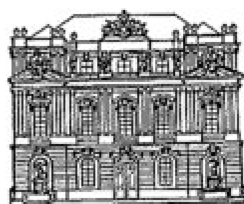
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A HISTORY OF TIBETAN PAINTING

The Great Tibetan Painters and Their Traditions

By
DAVID JACKSON



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WIEN 1996

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Front cover:
One of the Zhwa-dmar Karma-pas (possibly the 6th, Gar-dbang Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug, 1584–1630), from a set depicting the Karma bKa'-brgyud-pa lineage masters *(gser phreng)*.
This thangka painting belongs stylistically to the Kar-shod-pa tradition of Khams in eastern Tibet.
It was based on a series of paintings said to have been originally designed by Si-tu Pan-chen (1700–1774) and kept at dPal-spungs, and belongs to the same set as the thangka of the 13th Karma-pa signed by the artist "Mangga[lam]" [= bKra-shis], dating to approximately the late 18th century, also preserved in the Rolf and Helen von Büren collection.

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ཤེས་བྱའི་ཆོས་ཀུན་ཀློན་པའི་སྒྲུམས།　　།འདོམས་མཛད་མ་མ་དབྱངས་ཅན་ཞབས།

Sarasvatī, patron-goddess of the fine arts. Modern drawing, sGar-bris style. After Gega Lama (1983), p. 225.

*Dedicated to the forgotten Tibetans, among them many artists,
who have suffered and perished
in the last forty years for their beliefs and ways of life.*

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Foreword

The present study grew out of a paper that I began in 1980 in conjunction with my research on the methods and materials of Tibetan thangka painting. It was largely inspired then by the previous studies of Mr. E. Gene Smith (especially Smith [1970]), in whose library in New Delhi I was also able later to consult several important sources while in India from 1981 to 1983. I am indebted to Mr. Smith for looking through the paper as it stood in late 1981 and for discouraging me from publishing it then in that very unfinished state.

This study then remained in limbo for some years, and I did not pursue it further until 1991 when I came to Vienna to work at the Austrian Academy of Sciences and at Vienna University's Institute for Tibetology and Buddhist Studies. Here the proximity of several interested colleagues inspired me to take up the subject again. After reviewing the Western publications on Tibetan painting styles that had appeared in the meanwhile, I concluded that my earlier study, if revised and expanded, could still contribute something useful. Certainly the study will now reach a much larger and better-informed readership than would have been the case even ten years ago.

I am grateful to the Austrian Academy of Sciences for having provided, within the frame of its Institute for the Culture and Intellectual History of Asia, the right circumstances for me to pursue this study, and to Prof. Ernst Steinkellner for much-appreciated moral support. At many points during the study I also benefitted from the expertise and knowledge of Tibetan artists, including the late Shel-dkar dBang-grags (1925–1988), the late 'Phan-po Legs-grub-rgya-mtsho (1927/8–1984), and Lha-rtse Khang-zur Dar-rgyas. Other artists who were kind enough to furnish historical information included rTse-gdong che-mo Shi-log, dGe-dga' bla-ma, Dol-po Ting-kyu bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu, and Lha-thog Rang-dge rNam-rgyal-mgon-po. For historical references and for other assistance and inspiration I remain indebted to the late sDe-gzhung Rin-po-che, to bCo-brgyad Khri-chen Rin-po-che, Khra-'gu Rin-po-che, bsTan-dga' Rin-po-che, and 'Bri-gung Che-tshang Rin-po-che.

I am also very thankful to Dr. Deborah Klimburg-Salter, Dr. Erberto Lo Bue, Mr. Ngawang Tsering, Mr. Burkhard Quessel, Dr. Françoise Pommaret, Prof. Leonard van der Kuijp, Dr. Helga Uebach, Mr. Jampa Samten, Shastri, Ms. Ge Wan-zhang, Dr. Amy Heller, Mr. Cyrus Stearns, Dr. Veronika Ronge, Mr. Namgyal Ronge, and Dr. Samten Karmay for bringing Tibetan sources, data or modern publications to my attention or for helping me obtain copies of them. Deborah Klimburg-Salter, Leonard van der Kuijp, and Erberto Lo Bue were also kind enough to read through a draft of the book or at least several chapters of it and to offer helpful comments and suggestions. I am indebted to Mr. Tashi Tsering in particular for helping me locate many sources, including several otherwise unavailable modern Tibetan publications and rare manuscripts. Dr. Franz-Karl Ehrhard, too, deserves special

thanks for generously sharing many sources and references.

When finally readying this study for publication I benefitted from the careful proof-reading and suggestions of Ms. Sophie Kidd (Vienna). I am also deeply indebted to Mr. Philip Pierce (Kathmandu) for his very close reading of the manuscript; his remarks went far beyond that of a normal proof-reader and often addressed the accuracy of my texts, translations, and other matters of substance that only a highly versed specialist could have noticed.

I am likewise grateful for the cooperation of numerous individuals and institutions who helped in the arranging of the color plates. In this connection I would like to express special thanks to Mr. Ulrich von Schroeder, Dr. E. Jucker, Mr. R. Vitali, Prof. M. Driesch, Mr. M. Henss, Ms. Marilyn Kennell, Mr. G.-W. Essen, Mr. J. Zimmerman, Mr. and Mrs. R. von Büren, Mr. A. Fleischer and several who prefer to remain anonymous. That this book can be brought to completion in a settled and supportive environment, I owe to my beloved wife, Marhama.

I have tried to quote at length the most important passages from the Tibetan sources, not only for the benefit of fellow Western scholars but also in the hope that interested scholars of Tibetan nationality will also be able to share and make use of these references in the future. In a few instances I quote from one and then from another of two different editions of the same work. I trust that the reader will bear with such idiosyncracies, keeping in mind that the references for this book were gathered under various circumstances and in several different countries over the course of more than fifteen years. Furthermore, one possibly confusing convention I have followed regarding geographical terms is: *central Tibet* (uncapitalized) indicates both dBus and gTsang provinces, while *Central Tibet* (capitalized) indicates only dBus province.

I hope that future readers of original Tibetan historical sources—especially biographies—will take the trouble to note down and also, if the possibility presents itself, to publish further references to important artists and their works. I will be the first to admit that the present study just scratches the surface of what can be found even in the standard and now widely available biographical and other historical sources.

DAVID JACKSON
June, 1995, Schenefeld

Introduction

What knowledge could I have about most of the numerous [painting] traditions that differ from those [genuine ones]—degenerate, mixed-up styles that have no established tenets? Nevertheless, the traditions are many [and are] difficult to demarcate. Therefore, whatever errors are present in this [account of mine, which is like trying to] measure the sky in fathoms, I confess and renounce before the learned.

—De'u-dmar dge-bshes, *Kun gsal tshon,* ch. 10, v. 46.

How Tibetan Buddhist painting schools came into being and who the artists were who developed them are questions that have interested some of the greatest indigenous savants of Tibet for centuries and also a few Western scholars for decades. But until the present, very few systematic studies have been devoted to the subject. It is no mystery why at least Western scholars could not investigate the matter in detail until quite recently: going hand in hand with the general inaccessibility of Tibet and its major works of religious art, there has been the great difficulty of finding the relevant written Tibetan sources. Even for indigenous Tibetan scholars, the study of Tibetan art history in the traditional setting has not always been simple. For although a determined lama scholar could until the 1950s visit the important shrines as a pilgrim and see many works of holy art *in situ*, he still faced difficulties even then in finding sufficient historical and biographical sources to place the outstanding artists and their works in a clear and correct chronological framework.[1] Then as now, many of the important references for a history of Tibetan sacred art were scattered here and there in different libraries, among the diverse writings of numerous authors from various sects. Probably not more than a dozen libraries in Tibet had gathered together sufficient sources comparable to the varied and extensive holdings of a good modern Tibetological collection in the West.[2] And even if a Tibetan scholar managed to visit one of these libraries—such as the vast repository in the Potala palace—he would still have had trouble identifying and actually laying his hands on the particular treatises he needed.

Meanwhile most of the important pictorial sources for a systematic historical study of Tibetan painting—namely the murals of the Tibetan monasteries—have been lost forever. They were the target for systematic desecration and destruction in the late 1960s and early 1970s during the mass hysteria of the "Great Cultural Revolution." Nevertheless, a few dateable murals survived those ten years of great cultural devastation, and these must now be traced, documented and studied. Also, a number of precious and sometimes roughly dateable paintings have in recent decades found their way to museums or catalogued private collections outside of Tibet. Regardless of their tragic provenance, these too now furnish a tentative starting point for future stylistic studies.

For anyone pursuing historical research through written sources, moreover, the situation has improved dramatically in the last two decades. Both Western and Tibetan scholars, at least those living outside of Tibet with access to a research library with a decent collection of Tibetan works, are now in a position to find chronological information and to follow historical leads using a wealth of sources that would have been unthinkable even twenty years ago. Based on newly repub-

lished Tibetan accounts on art—as well as on the now commonly available biographies, accounts of pilgrims, and similar sources—one can now begin assembling a somewhat more detailed and coherent account of Tibet's greatest artists and their traditions.

In the following pages I would therefore like to present a preliminary sketch, summarizing what a number of important traditional sources reveal about the greatest painters of Tibet, their schools and their styles. The study begins with an introductory section, Part I, which presents in Chapter 1 a sketch of previous research on the topic by Western scholars and in Chapter 2 a survey of the main Tibetan writings on the subject, both traditional and modern. The main body of the study, Part II, is the actual historical sketch of the great painters and their styles from the 15th century onwards. Its first chapter summarizes the references I have located so far to Tibetan painters of the earliest periods. Chapter 2 describes the master painter Bye'u (fl. 1420s-30s?) and two other important figures in early-15th-century western gTsang province. Chapter 3 is a description of the career of sMan-thang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub (fl. 1450s-70s) and some of the earlier founders of his tradition. Chapter 4 summarizes what is known about mKhyen-brtse of Gong-dkar (fl. 1450s-70s) and the later followers of his tradition. Chapter 5 addresses the painting school of the Karma-pa encampment founded by Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis (fl. 1560s-90s). Chapter 6 investigates the careers of 'Phreng-kha-ba and a few other outstanding sMan-ris artists of the 16th and 17th centuries. Chapter 7 discusses the sMan-ris artists patronized by the 5th Dalai Lama and the sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho. Chapter 8 sketches what could be discovered so far about the New sMan-ris style of gTsang-pa Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho (fl. 1640s-60s). Chapter 9 describes the unusual contributions of Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje, the 10th Zhwa-nag Karma-pa. Chapter 10 takes as its subject the artistic works of the great Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas, whereas Chapter 11 treats the two later famous sGar-bris painters named "bKra-shis," and the Kar-shod-pa Tradition. Chapter 12 describes the relevant works of Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen of lDan-ma, and chapter 13 consists of some preliminary notes on later regional styles. Chapter 14 brings the main body of the study to an end with a few concluding remarks, mainly concerning some of the concrete factors that can strongly affect style. Finally, a concluding section of supporting materials presents in a series of ten appendices the most important Tibetan texts on styles, mostly with translations, as well as a bibliography and indexes. I wanted to include within the scope of this study all Tibetan cultural areas—from Ladakh to A-mdo and from Bhutan to the Byang-thang—but the known relevant sources have limited me mainly to describing developments in the provinces of dBus, gTsang, and Khams.

The present book aims at providing a somewhat firmer historical framework for future scholars who would like to undertake more detailed stylistic analyses using the traditional categories. But besides translating a few usually terse descriptions and attempting a few identifications here and there, I will leave it to others to describe in more detail the various styles. This will gradually become easier as more and more firmly attributable paintings are discovered. For the time being the traditional stylistic categories should probably be used with some caution. Moreover, there is no need to force all works of art into a few preconceived stylistic strait-jackets. The paintings exist in their own right, and they no doubt embody stylistic developments that are far more complex than are indicated by the handful of great artists and school names known to us at present. Nevertheless, one of the things students of this art must ultimately aim for is an understanding of where these paintings stood in their own civilization, within the context of their own religious and learned culture. For studying Tibetan painting—here specifically its stylistic developments after about 1450—within its own traditional context, the writings and descriptive categories of Tibet's own experts can serve as very good points of departure.

Since the following study concentrates on the great painters of Tibet, one might well ask: What was the place of any individual painter—great or

small—in traditional Tibet? The point has been well made that what stands in the foreground in Tibetan Buddhist art is not the relation between artist and work of art, but rather that between donor and deity.[3] But it does not automatically follow from this that the history of Tibetan art, and especially of its finest masterpieces, can be effectively approached if one completely ignores the existence of the painter or sculptor. Excellent artists have always been prized, honored and patronized by the great lamas and donors in Tibet. Moreover, in the course of Tibetan history, a number of great artistic geniuses appeared who left the deep impress of their personal style on posterity, sometimes even founding schools of art named after them. The present study is precisely an attempt to find out more about these most exceptional artists and their traditions.

Notes

[1] Previous Tibetan pilgrims (all from Khams) who kept more or less detailed records of their travels in Central Tibet were Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas (1700–1774), 'Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po (1820–1892), Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho (1880–1925), and rDzong-gsar mKhyen-brtse Chos-kyi-blo-gros (1893–1959). (These are all listed in the English introduction to Kaḥ-thog Si-tu's work, p. 1.) The work of rDzong-gsar mKhyen-brtse is not known to survive. Another such pilgrimage account was that of Brag-mgon sprul-sku 'Jam-dbyangs-bstan-pa-rgya-mtsho, *dBus gtsang gnas yig mi brjed dran pa'i gsal 'debs gzur gnas mkhas pa'i rna rgyan*, though I have not yet seen it. 'Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po's guide has been translated and annotated by A. Ferrari (1958). Such writings are extremely precious records now, after the destruction of most of what they describe.

[2] I am thinking in particular of the American collections built up from books published in India by the Library of Congress through the Special Currencies Acquisition Program, overseen by Mr. E. G. Smith, from the late 1960s to the mid 1980s. From the mid 1980s on many classics have also been published from Tibet and China, in some cases based on the Indian reprints.

[3] Essen and Thingo (1989), p. 17. On the use of thangkas within Tibetan culture, see D. Jackson (1984), pp. 9-11, and also Yael Bentor (1993), pp. 109-112. On the role of the artist, see A. Chayet (1994), pp. 165ff. On the relation of Tibetan painters and painting practice to earlier Indian Buddhist ritual traditions, see now M. Kapstein (1995).

Part I

Introductory Matter

Chapter I

Previous Research by Western Scholars

Although investigations into the development of indigenous Tibetan painting styles go back several centuries among Tibetan historians, in the West the first significant study dates back only about seventy years. Nevertheless, within the development of modern Tibetan studies seventy years is still a fairly long period, and in it there have appeared a considerable number of books and articles on this subject. Therefore instead of launching here directly into the Tibetan sources and their contents, it might be helpful to begin by summarizing the results of previous modern studies, especially as they touch on the indigenously recognized styles.[4] Those readers who are not interested in following the development of research in the field or in learning more about the main Tibetan sources can simply jump ahead to the historical sketch itself as presented in Part II.

G. N. Roerich (1925)

The earliest account of Tibetan painting styles by a Western scholar was that of George Roerich (1925) in his *Tibetan Paintings*, pp. 13-16.[5] Roerich acknowledged that he did not know the subject well enough to discuss the schools of art adequately, but he went ahead and distinguished at least two main "areas of artistic activity" in Tibet: the "South-Western" and the "North-Eastern." The first he described as having its center in Shigatse, and he said that its traditions were a tributary of Indo-Nepalese art. The second school was centered in Derge, and he said that it had the same Indo-Nepalese foundations, though it had received later additional influences from Mongolia and China. He also mentioned three local schools: "the Lhasa school, the Gyantse school, and the school of the Khams province in Eastern Tibet." He summarized (p. 16) his sketch with words that made clear more than anything else the paucity of materials available to him then:

> Such are the two big artistic schools of Tibet. It is impossible to say how far back we can trace their existence, for Tibetan art is entirely anonymous and the complete absence of dates makes it almost impossible to reconstruct chronologically the outstanding events of Tibetan artistic history.

The actual situation, however, was not quite as bleak as Roerich believed, as will be shown in the following pages.

Roerich mentioned furthermore (p. 20) a "*Vaiḍūrya ser po*" as a written source for art. He concluded: "The time has not yet come to write a history of Tibetan art." And further (p. 21): "Only when all the extant material [in Western European and Russian collections] will be edited and a number of Tibetan iconographical texts studied and commented on can we hope to produce a history of Tibetan art."

G. Tucci (1932-41) and (1949)

G. Tucci superseded the contributions of Roerich with his major works *Indo-Tibetica* (1932-41) and *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (1949)—especially with the latter. It has almost become a routine to refer to Tucci's *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* as a classic



Fig. 1. Mañjuśrī, Bodhisattva of wisdom. Modern drawing, A-mdo (rGyal-rong) style. After Amdo Jamyang ('Jam-dbyangs-blo-gsal, 1982), p. 95.

or as his *magnum opus*, but in its day the work towered high above its predecessors, and even now the work repays careful study for anyone interested not just in art, but also in other aspects of Tibetan civilization such as history, religion and literature. In the last four decades, Tibetan studies have advanced further in all these areas, and now it is often possible to correct Tucci on points of detail. Nevertheless, much of this further progress was made possible by Tucci's spadework.

One of the great advantages that Tucci enjoyed over most Western scholars, both before and since, was that he was able to visit many of the great monasteries of western and central Tibet, and thus could see many of Tibet's greatest monuments of sacred art intact, entire, and in their original setting. He paid particular attention to studying inscriptions in the field. In addition he had the advantage of being able to use at home a large collection of written sources he had gathered in Tibet—a collection that he brought to Rome and which was almost unrivalled in the West until the 1970s. To this day, however, many of these books remain uncatalogued and therefore for all practical purposes inaccessible.[6]

To some extent the method of Tucci had been anticipated by the earlier studies of A. H. Francke, especially the two-volume work *Antiquities of Ancient Tibet* (1914 & 1926). Francke's studies were based in the first place on a very sound grasp of the Tibetan language. He had also adopted a similarly broad approach which included the use of written sources in general, local histories in particular, attention to ruins and artifacts of all periods, and professional photographic documentation. Francke's researches, however, were limited to western Tibet (where Tucci, too, would soon begin), and his findings did not include any information on the greatest painters and their traditions.

Tucci, like Francke two decades before him, was apparently not familiar with the traditional terminology for Tibetan painting styles. Perhaps he simply did not notice any of the more extensive relevant passages in his readings. He knew at least Sum-pa mkhan-po's brief account of the great Tibetan painters, citing it (*Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, p. 293) as a source on the great artist Sman-thang-pa, though he did not utilize it fully. He also enumerated (*ibid.*) the several great Tibetan artists found in Klong-rdol bla-ma's listing, taking them to be authors of written sources on art (which a number of great painters were, as well). If he had been aware of the other more extensive traditional discussions, such as in the *Bai ḍū rya g.ya' sel* of sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, he probably would have mentioned and made use of them.[7]

When he did adopt a stylistic terminology, it was in a rather eclectic way, based variously on countries, Tibetan provinces and religious schools. In vol. II, part 3, of his work, he has grouped the paintings under the following stylistic rubrics: Nepalese schools, Guge school, Composite style (I. Sa skya pa and rÑiṅ ma pa, and II. Other schools), The great Tibetan monasteries of the Yellow sect, Tibetan "Settecento" various schools, K'ams style, and Central Asian style.[8]

Tucci's contribution was greater with regard to individual great artists. He listed the names of numerous painters that he found mentioned in the mural inscriptions preserved in the Tibetan monasteries he had visited (p. 207; I will reproduce those lists below), and he did not neglect to cull references to important artists from the historical sources he used. For instance, he referred (p. 200) to the artist sPun-khyem-pa who was active at Jo-nang (?) in about 1618, painting there under the patronage of Jo-nang Tāranātha (1575–1634). Tucci presented several other such references, most notably from the biographies of the 5th Dalai Lama and the 1st Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che. Not being familiar with the traditional style names, however, he could not make full use of these passages. But even to cite these references was useful, and in the following pages I have followed up as many of them as I could.[9]

Tucci's contributions to the precise subject matter of the present study—the great painters and their schools—were thus helpful though limited. Nevertheless in his scholarly method, especially in how he treated the paintings in combination with the relevant written sources, he was for

many decades unsurpassed.[10] His works mark the true beginning of serious Western studies on Tibetan art history, and his books remain required reading for anyone interested in the subject.

THE 14TH DALAI LAMA, TENZIN GYATSO (1963)

One of the earliest listings of the names of the greatest Tibetan painters to appear in English was given by H. H. the Dalai Lama in a brief contribution entitled "Three Answers from the Dalai Lama." This article appeared in an issue of *Marg* magazine dedicated to Tibetan art. Within three years of his flight from the Chinese Communists and his forced exile in India, the Dalai Lama himself was available for answering questions about Tibetan art! In his second answer the young Dalai Lama asserted (probably with a little help from one of his learned advisers or teachers):

> Then after that, about 600 years ago, during the periods of Menlha Thondup Dorji from the south of Central Tibet, Khentsi Chinmo from near about Lhasa, the eighth and tenth Karmapa and the three great painters of different periods who had the same name Tashi, Tibet developed its own style of painting and it became very well known. During the early period most of the artists were men of religion, but since then the artists in Tibet were mostly ordinary craftsmen.

It seems that this account was based—directly or indirectly—on Kong-sprul's "Encyclopedia" (on which more will be said below).

THE TIBET HOUSE INAUGURAL EXHIBITION CATALOGUE (1965)

By a sad irony, the disaster for the Tibetan people in 1959 quickly became a great boon for foreign scholars interested in Tibet. Life in exile encouraged many of the learned Tibetans who had been able to escape from Tibet to make available information and promote interest in the various branches of their Buddhist culture, including religious art. This also took place through the founding of institutions: for instance, the Tibet House was set up in New Delhi in the early 1960s with the support of H. H. the Dalai Lama and his exile government in India to give Tibetan culture and the Tibetan cause a wider public exposure. Thus it is fitting that the first mention of the indigenous Tibetan terminology of stylistic classification in an English publication appeared in the *Catalogue of the Inaugural Exhibition* of the Tibet House Museum [New Delhi] (1965).

This exhibition catalogue was prepared by Sonam Topgay Kazi with the editorial assistance of Richard Bartholomew. Evidently the former translated and abridged a Tibetan text (which an unnamed traditional scholar had written for the Tibet House?). In addition to a regional classification (plate 1 is described as being in the "Central Tibetan Style"), this catalogue also used such terms as (p. 23) "the Eastern Tibetan style called Karmai-ga-dri" and (p. 22 and facing illustration) "Blend of Ga-dri and Men-dri Schools." The terms were used without any explicit explanation, and they were apparently based on identifications made by learned Tibetan lamas.

TIBET HOUSE MUSEUM (1966)

Another similar contribution by Sonam Topgay Kazi, edited again by Richard Bartholomew, was the Tibet House catalogue entitled "Second Exhibition of Tibetan Art." It too used such terms as "Mendri" and "Karmai-ga-dri" without explicating them.

R. BARTHOLOMEW (1967)

In addition to his work on the Tibet House catalogues, Richard Bartholomew also contributed a further article, "Tibetan Thangkas," to the *Times of India Annual, 1967*, which described the same thangkas in a sensitive way. He stated (p. 31) that the paintings under discussion "are from five schools of Tibetan painting on view at the Tibet House Museum," though as far as I can tell he only mentioned four (perhaps he meant to distinguish the Central Tibetan from the "U-dri" [i.e. Ü-dri, *dbus bris*] school?). These four were:

(1) The Karmai-ga-dri school of the 15th century, "the oldest style represented." These examples too were said to be originally from a bKa'-brgyud monastery in eastern Tibet. (plates 2, 3, 9, 11)
(2) A blend of the Ga-dri and Men-dri schools of the 18th century. These examples were said to be originally from a rNying-ma monastery in eastern Tibet. (plates 4, 6, 7)

(3) Eastern Tibetan school, 18th century. (plate 1)
(4) Central Tibetan or Ü-dri school, 16th century. (plates 5, 8, 10)

It is highly doubtful that any Karma sgar-bris works could date to the 15th century, since the style did not become current until considerably later. Similarly it remains unclear on what basis the works ascribed to the Central Tibet or Ü-dri school had been dated to the 16th century.

Exhibition of Tibetan Arts and Crafts, Bombay (1967)

This brief catalogue was written in connection with the exhibition of Tibetan arts and crafts held at the Jehangir Art Gallery, Bombay, in December 1967. It concludes with a short note by Domo Geshe Rinpoche (N. Jigme), acting director of Tibet House at the time. The styles mentioned in the publication include: "Central Tibetan Style," "Karma Gadri school," "Gadri Mendri style," "Udri school," "Mendri school," and "Late Mendri."

W. D. Shakabpa (1967)

A brief mention of the three most famous traditional styles likewise appeared in W. D. Shakabpa's *Tibet: A Political History* (1967), p. 11, although a misplaced comma in the English translation erroneously divided the "Gongkar Khyenri" (*gong dkar mkhyen ris*) into two:

> Three of the most prominent schools of painting are the Karma Gardre of Kham, the Gongkar, Khyenri, and the Menthong Ari of Ü.

Presumably the "Menthong Ari" should be in Tibetan *sman thang e ris*. The full Tibetan version of Shakabpa's history (published 1976, described below with the modern Tibetan sources) goes much further, and it is one of the most valuable contributions by any Tibetan scholar, traditional or modern.

G. Tucci (1967)

Tucci also summarized his findings in his more recent book *Tibet, Land of Snows*. In the latter work, chapter 4, pp. 98-122, he briefly surveyed the Tibetan religious arts. On p. 111, the author stated:

> ... Repeated journeys through Tibet have yielded me no more than three score names of painters, nearly always in the explanatory or dedicatory inscriptions appended to the cycles painted on the walls of temples or in *kumbum* shrines. But some have their names recorded in literary sources as particularly gifted artists, examples being Töndrup-gyatso [Don-grub-rgya-mtsho], commended by the fifth Dalai Lama as 'supreme painter,' and Chhöying-gyatso [Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho] of Tsang, summoned to decorate the Potala by the same Dalai Lama. Menthangpa [sMan-thang-pa], along with his son, is mentioned in numerous works.

J. C. Huntington (1968)

The first monograph-length study devoted to the subject of Tibetan painting styles was the Ph.D. dissertation of John C. Huntington: "The Styles and Stylistic Sources of Tibetan Painting" (University of California Los Angeles, 1968). In this study Huntington primarily stressed the regional nature of Tibetan painting, and taking his cue from the apparently geographical designations used by Shakabpa (1967, p. 11), he attempted to describe the main regional styles. As Huntington (pp. 9-10) wrote:

> The method being proposed is to study the documents of the history of religion that we have in the extant scroll paintings and frescoes not as a unified whole but rather, separated into convenient regional classifications on the basis of style. The Tibetans give the following list of style designations: "Karma Gardre" in Khams district in Eastern Tibet (Karma sGar bris) which designates the painting of the Karma sect from the district of sGar in western Khams, "Gong kar" (Gong dkar) in dBus which may refer to either a monastery or an estate in the center of which is a town in the valley of the gTsang-po river in dBus, "Khen ri" (mKhan ris) of dBus and finally "Menhong [E]ri" (sMan-thang E-bris), of which "E" designates a district in dBus (Ü).... These are regional designations and indicate an awareness by the Tibetans of the regional nature of styles.

The four main regional styles that Huntington himself attempted to isolate and describe in the body of his work were those of western Tibet, central Tibet, Khams, and the Sino-Tibetan interface region.

E. G. SMITH (1970)

The first Western scholar to make extensive use of the indigenous written accounts on styles was E. Gene Smith. This he did in his English introduction to the *Shes bya kun khyab* of Kong-sprul (1970). Later Western studies, including the present one, are heavily indebted to his pioneering effort, as will become clear also from the number of times he is cited below.[11] Smith began his account of Tibetan art by presenting (pp. 38-41) the relevant passage from Kong-sprul's "Encyclopedia" as a typical example of the latter's expository method. After translating the basic verses and autocommentary in footnotes 69-71, Smith then (pp. 42-51) rewrote and expanded the account into a form that would be more suitable for an entry in a true encyclopedia. To summarize his main assertions about each founding painter and major "school":

[1] The sMan-ris. It was founded by sMan-bla-don-grub during the first half of the 15th century, and it was influenced by Yüan-dynasty temple banners, especially elegant embroideries. The sMan-ris came to flourish in gTsang.

[2] The mKhyen-ris. Founded in the 16th century by 'Jam-dbyangs mKhyen-brtse'i-dbang-phyug, it shows a degree of Chinese influence, though it differs from the sMan-ris. "The finer painters of Sa-skya and Ṅor of the late 16th century represent this school at its best."

[3] The sGar-bris or Karma sGar-bris. Founded by Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis, it developed out of the old sMan-ris during the second half of the 16th century. It reflects Ming-dynasty developments in Chinese paintings. The other two great artists of the tradition were Chos-bkra-shis (fl. latter half of 17th or first half of 18th c.) and Karma-bkra-shis (contemporary of Si-tu Paṇ-chen, founded Kar-shod school in Khams). The sGar-bris "was the style in which the majority of the Karma Dkar-brgyud-pa painters in Kham and Amdo worked."

[4] The Byi'u-ris (or Bye'u-ris). Founded by sPrul-sku Byi'u or Bye'u, who would "seem to date from the 16th c."

[5] The sMan-ris gsar-ma. This tradition was founded by Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho of gTsang ("fl. between 1620 and 1665"), who was patronized by the 1st paṇ-chen and later called by the 5th Dalai Lama to work for him. According to Smith, p. 46, "This style continued to flourish and, blended with Khyenri, Gadri and later Indian influences, is represented by the 20th century Lhasa or Central Tibetan mode."

Smith's contribution thus contained much new material and many useful suggestions. But being a pioneering work based on just a few sources, it was weak on some points, such as in its chronology of a few of the earlier key painters.

Smith proposed for instance that the great sMan-thang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub had flourished in the first half of the 15th century (following T. G. Dhongthog, who in a chronological compilation had dated the establishment of his school to 1400 [*sic*]), while placing mKhyen-brtse in the mid 16th century and Bye'u similarly as probably in the 16th century, though without any firm evidence for these datings. Smith was aware that his sources did not allow more than tentative chronological conclusions. In his main text (p. 44), he stated, for instance: "The 16th century saw the birth of its second great school, the Khyenri (*mKhyen-ris*), which takes its origins and name from 'Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-brtse'i-dbang-phyug [b. 1524]."[12] But in a footnote he immediately added that the relevant biographies were not yet available to confirm this provisional identification, noting several problems and even asking: "Could it be we are dealing with two different personages?" Subsequent Western scholars, however, have generally accepted this hypothetical chronology for the earlier Tibetan schools and have also overlooked some of the very real doubts that Smith himself raised about it.

J. C. HUNTINGTON (1972)

A study on a single regional style was published in the early 1970s by John C. Huntington, namely the article: "Gu-ge bris: A Stylistic Amalgam."[13] Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 275, had already spoken of "paintings executed by the school of Guge," but I do not recall actually seeing the term **gu ge*

bris in any Tibetan work. Here there was no detailed mention of other painting traditions.

TIBETAN NYINGMA MEDITATION CENTER (1972, REISSUE 1974)

This publication appeared in connection with the "Sacred Art of Tibet" exhibition at Lone Mountain College, San Francisco, in December 1972. Its first section, "The Development of Tibetan Art," includes two pages (without pagination) touching on stylistic developments, based on Kong-sprul and Smith (1970). The authors repeat the identification of Gong-dkar mKhyen-brtse with mKhyen-brtse'i-dbang-phyug (b. 1524), and they generally follow Smith's account of later styles, describing for instance the sMan-ris gsar-ma as "blending Khyenri, Gadri and late Indian styles," and saying it was "represented by the Lhasa or Central Tibetan style (*dbus bris*) of the 20th century."

H. KARMAY (1975)

A valuable contribution appearing in the mid 1970s was Heather Karmay's *Early Sino-Tibetan Art* (1975). It concentrated on Chinese-influenced works of earlier periods and mentioned the later stylistic classifications only in passing. In the introduction (p. 8), however, the author did mention a traditional account of Chinese influence on the important Tibetan painter sMan-bla-don-grub, founder of the sMan-bris tradition:



Fig. 2. The Indian sage Ātreya, a legendary authority on art. Drawn by sMad-shod A-'phel, xylographed in the Derge edition of the Tanjur (1744), vol. 305 (right). Published: J. Kolmaś (1978), p. 266.

In his introduction to Kongtrul's *Encyclopedia of Indo-Tibetan Culture,* Gene Smith has translated a section on the origins of indigenous schools of painting in Tibet, the most interesting and useful account so far available. Further information will no doubt come to light as Tibetan literature is better known and more accessible. Of the information given in this annotated translation, the founding of the Menthang (*sMan-thang*) school by sMan-bla Don-grub rgyal-po of Lho-brag is of interest here. The date of its foundation is given as 1409 AD. sMan-bla Don-grub rgyal-po studied painting with rDo-pa bKra-shis rgyal-po and seems to have taken part of his inspiration from the embroidered and woven tapisseries of the Yüan dynasty, created in China and sent to Tibet as religious presents.[note 53] Kongtrul's account, more than any other, demonstrates that in Tibet, at least from the 15th century [note 54] onwards, there were artists of great renown whose works were cherished and whose inspiration could come from a wide variety of sources, not simply from a rigid and slavish imitation of what was laid down by tradition. Some of the schools described have living continuous traditions right up to the present day.[note 55]

In her first note to this passage (p. 31, note 53), the author mentioned the strong Chinese influence on the Karma-sgar-bris tradition of painting:

Of the other six indigenous schools of painting described, the *Karma sgar-bris* is said to have developed out of the classical *sMan-bris* in the second half of the 16th c. and has strong Chinese influences reflecting Ming dynasty developments in landscapes, composition and in the use of colour. Artists from eastern Tibet, i.e. Khams and A-mdo, painted in this style. In *TPS* [1949] Tucci mentions other early Chinese connections. On p. 629, an artist called dGa'-bde went several times to the Mongol court and also worked in Lhasa with Chinese artists. His son is also said to have worked in Chinese style. On p. 555 Tucci talks about the Chinese style and says....

In the next note (note 54) she mentioned the relatively widespread existence of the names of artists in Tibetan sources and her own attempts to begin tracing them:

See [Tucci's] *IT* [*Indo-Tibetica*] IV.1, p. 19, for a list of 34 names of artists that Tucci found on frescoes in temples of central Tibet, particularly in the rGyal-rtse sKu-'bum. He considers that by the beginning of the 15th century the artists had reached such a level of maturity that, inebriated by their own brilliance, they left their names to posterity.

I have continued to collect names, including those given in *Kongtrul's Encyclopedia, op. cit.* and have without difficulty found more than a hundred. Substantial numbers mentioned in texts await further investigation.

In a final note on the subject (note 55) she briefly mentions the two main painting traditions still existing among the Tibetans, here following Smith (1970) on the origins of the sMan-ris gsar-ma:

The two principal schools active up to the present, representatives of both of which I have worked with for short periods, are the *Karma sgar-bris* of eastern Tibet, particularly Khams, see above, n. 53, and the *sMan-bris gsar-ma*, which developed out of the *sMan-thang* and *mKhyen-bris* school which was the style current in Lhasa from the 19th century onwards, see *Kongtrul's Encyclopedia*, p. 19. ....

CHOGYAM TRUNGPA (1975)

Another publication of this period that used traditional Tibetan stylistic terminology was the book of Chogyam Trungpa (1975), which listed (p. 16) "three predominant schools of Tibetan thangka painting":

Kadam (*bka' gdams*): "the early classical school."
Menri (*sman ris*): "the later classical school, founded in the fifteenth century." This style also includes the New Menri (*sman gsar*): "a later development of the Menri in the late seventeenth century."
Karma Gardri (*karma sgar bris*): "developed in the sixteenth century mainly by the eighth Karmapa ... [and] further elaborated by the renowned master [Si-tu Paṇ-chen] Chokyi Jungne."

This seems to be the first mention of a "Kadam" style. Note that the actual thangkas designated in the catalogue as "Kadam style" belonged in fact to later varieties of the sMan-ris and not to any early (pre-15th-century) style.

L. S. DAGYAB (1977)

Loden Sherab Dagyab (Blo-ldan-shes-rab, Brag-g.yab Rin-po-che) in his *Tibetan Religious Art* (part 1, pp. 36-9) gave a brief account of the main indigenous Tibetan schools, famous artists, and so forth. His sketch was based on such sources as Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen, Klong-rdol bla-ma and Kong-sprul's accounts of Tibetan art history, as well as on several standard biographical and historical sources (e.g. Sum-pa mkhan-po). He dated the birth of sMan-bla-don-grub to the early 15th century. Like Smith, he also described (p. 37) the Si-thang rGya-mdzad chen-mo as a [Chinese] "piece of tapestry work," giving the erroneous spelling "Zi'u-thang rgya-mdzod chen-mo." This Chinese scroll *painting* (*si thang*) was in fact a depiction of the Buddha's Great Deeds following Chinese Buddhist tradition (*rgya mdzad chen mo*). This shows to what extent some of these special names and terms relating to art have been forgotten even by the Tibetan learned tradition.

Dagyab Rinpoche usually cited sources without giving page or folio numbers (a great inconvenience for anyone trying to trace a single brief passage in a work several hundred folios long).[14] He also listed sources in the bibliography by *title* and not by author, with only minimal publication data, and even included in the bibliography a number of sources that he only knew secondhand and which are presumably no longer extant. But these were just minor drawbacks—no doubt reflecting traditional Tibetan scholarly practice. In fact, his book was by far the most useful summary and presentation of the traditional sources until then.

A. MACDONALD AND A. VERGATI STAHL (1979)

A. Macdonald and A. Vergati Stahl (1979), p. 35, in the context of their discussion of cultural exchanges between the Newars and Tibetans, and the question of Newar influences on Tibetan art styles, summarized the account of Smith (1970), thus bringing Smith's findings to the attention of a wider readership. This account illustrates the incompleteness of Smith's sketch and the ease with which further misunderstandings could creep in, such as regarding the place where the sMan-ris developed (it was not Derge), the role played by Chinese embroidered thangkas in its formation, and the origins of the Karma-sgar-bris. The authors also repeated the erroneous dating of the mKhyen-ris and its founder to the 16th century.

NGAWANG GELEK DEMO (1979)

Yet another Tibet House exhibition catalogue was published in 1979 in connection with the first exhibition held after moving into the new Tibet House premises. The text was written by Ngawang Gelek Demo, assisted by Gyaltsen Yeshey and Ngawang Phuntshok. The editors were Dr. N. Ribush and Trisha Donelly. On pp. 2-3 in a section subtitled "A Brief History of Tibetan Art," Gelek Rinpoche summarized his description of the traditional painting styles. In essence, this was a summarizing or rephrasing of E. Gene Smith's account of ten years before. In some cases errors had crept in, such as in the listing, p. 2, of the five main Indian styles from which Tibetan painting arose, which included: "[1] Nubnying (Substraction) [*sic*], [2] Sharthung (Pali style) [*sic*], ..." These were taken from E. G. Smith (1970), p. 42, n. 72, who was summarizing Kong-sprul's description of the origins of the art of Nepal: "The three factors that are involved in the makeup of the Beri are: 1) the Nub-rñiṅ, the substratum; 2) the Śar-mthun, the Pāla style; 3) the synthesizing force that is the genius of the Nepalese people."

Concerning the sMan-bris, the author stated (p. 2) that sMan-bla-don-grub later moved to gTsang and that "the Menri style he established flourished much more in Tsang than in his birthplace of Lhodak [in southern dBus province]." This assertion was also made by Smith (1970), p. 43. Though sMan-bla-don-grub is known to have studied and also worked very much in gTsang, his tradition came in fact to flourish widely at least as much in dBus province as in gTsang. On mKhyen-brtse, Gelek Rinpoche followed the chronology suggested by Smith, and went on to state: "The famous Ngor Monastery paintings are a fine example of the Khyenri school," though the latter identification was wrong.

He helpfully identified (p. 3) Tsangpa Choiying Gyatso (gTsang-pa Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho) as the "private artist of the 1st Panchen Lama," which indeed he was, though the 5th Dalai Lama was on occasion able to requisition his services. He gave the dates (1622–1665) for this same artist, based on Smith's estimates. He asserted in addition that this was the style of Chemo Paljor Gyalpo [che-mo dPal-'byor-rgyal-po], chief artist of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

The sketch concludes with a listing of minor styles, including (1) the "Dhag-ri" (*dwags ris*), a style which began in Dwags-po but later spread further south to Bhutan and Mon; (2) "Jhang-ri" (*byang ris*), the early-15th-century style of the Byang-bdag rNam-rgyal-grags-bzang; (3) "Dhan-ri" (*ldan ris*), apparently an early sMan-ris style associated with lDan-ma district in Khams; (4) "Jiwalug" (**byi ba lugs = byi'u ris*), the style of sPrul-sku Bye'u (15th c.); and (5) the "Dri-ri" (*'bri ris*), the style of 'Bri-gung.

J. C. HUNTINGTON (1980)

John C. Huntington (1980) in a book review of D.-I. Lauf (1976) objected to Lauf's not using the traditional school names, and he briefly summed up as follows his own understanding of the traditional styles and their nomenclature (all parentheses and square brackets are his):[15]

1 sMan-'bris "drawing [in the manner of] sMan," may be seen in plates 25, 26, 45, and 54. sMan is known for having added very minor Chinese elements to the Bal-'bris school as painted in Tibet.

2 sMan-'bris ser-ma ("New sMan-'bris") may be seen in plates 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 19, 21, 32, 40, 41, 49, and 50. This school has a great deal of Chinese influence in subsidiary details and a characteristic broad face to the figures. It is also known as dBus-'bris, and is, what amounts to, the dGe-lugs-pa international school.

3 mKhyen-'bris "drawing [in the manner of] mKhyen," may be seen in plate 24. In its pure form, this school is one of the rarest and most beautiful of all schools of Tibetan painting. mKhyen-'bris ser-ma, the later outgrowth of mKhyen-'bris, also known as gTsang-'bris, may be seen in plates 9, 20, 27, 42 and 60.

4 Bal-'bris "drawing [in the] Nepali (more accurately Newar) [manner]," may be seen in plates 3 and 4, while Nepali paṭa are illustrated in plates 58 and 59. The Nepali artists actually travelled to Tibet and were the masters for both mural and thangka paintings. Until about the mid-fifteenth century south central Tibet, the gTsang district paintings, were almost exclusively in this manner. However, by that time the sMan (d. 1409) school had begun to become important and there is a continuum of increasing Chinese influence in gTsang district painting until the division of the mKhyen school and the advent of the sMan-'bris ser-ma.

5 Kar-ma sGa-'bris "Kar-ma-pa drawing of the sGa district," may be seen in plates 14 and 35. This general

name covers many sub-schools and is not limited to paintings for the Kar-ma-pa sect. On the contrary, rNying-ma and bKa'-brgyud-pa paintings predominate. Generally these paintings are characterized by exceptionally fine quality and precise detailing with a strong admixture of the Chinese blue-green school.

6 rGya-nak-'bris "drawing in the Chinese manner." This term applies to two types of Chinese produced paintings, one, those done in a Chinese manner and in a Chinese style but depicting Tibetan Buddhist subjects, and two, to paintings usually in the sMan-'bris ser-ma style but done in China. The latter may be seen in plate 12.

The brief sketch given by Huntington in his discussion of the Bal-ris (note 4), with its hypothetical chronology (including a death date for sMan-thang-pa about a century too early), would be significantly revised by him later.

E. F. Lo Bue (1983)

Erberto F. Lo Bue (1983), in an informative catalogue to an exhibition held in Turin, pp. xviii-xix, gave a synopsis of many of the then available traditional accounts, though without specifying which sources he had used. He retranslated the account from Kong-sprul's "Encyclopedia," improving on Smith's translation in a few places. He also commented (p. xxi):

> The 17th century marks perhaps the peak of Tibetan painting ..., thanks to the patronage of patrons such as the 5th Dalai Lama and his regent. In this epoch can be placed Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho (flourished 1620-65) and the Tenth successor in the line of the Karma-pa sect, Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje (1604-74). The former was the creator of wall paintings in various temples, both new and restored, in the gTsang district, including that of mChod-rten Khang-shar, the mausoleum built to hold the remains of his patron, the 1st pan-chen Lama (1570–1662).

Lo Bue's stressing of gTsang as the location of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's main works was, I believe, very apt. He mentioned further that the painter Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho contributed to the painting of murals at the Potala from 1648, and that much further information about him can be located in the biographies of the 5th Dalai Lama and the 1st Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che, though by an oversight he refers (p. xxiv) to Kong-sprul's account concerning the similarly named Tenth Karma-pa, Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje. Lo Bue also suggested that the word *kha che* in Kong-sprul's work should be better understood as "Islamic" (i.e. Moghul) instead of as "Kashmiri."

P. Pal (1983)

The catalogue by Pratapaditya Pal to the Tibetan art collection in the Los Angeles County Museum was in some important respects an improvement over many previous museum and exhibition catalogues in that quite a bit of the inscriptional evidence had been taken into account.[16] It included an appendix to the catalogue by Hugh Richardson entitled "Text and Translation of Selected Inscriptions on Tibetan Works in the Museum's Collection" (pp. 258-263) in which most of the inscriptions on the paintings were recorded. When it came to painting styles, however, the author ventured upon more dangerous ground, at times trying to attribute paintings to regions or specific monasteries and at times classifying them as products of specific religious orders.[17]

P. Pal (1984)

P. Pal devoted his next book specifically to the history of Tibetan thangkas from the 11th to 19th centuries, and this publication is valuable for the wealth of paintings illustrated and discussed. He aimed at setting forth a history and analysis of styles, attempting in spite of considerable obstacles to place thangkas (p. 1) "in their stylistic and chronological context and to build an infrastructure for their study from a stylistic and aesthetic rather than iconographic viewpoint." In his book Pal carried further his attempt to orient stylistic terminology closer to sectarian affiliations (using such terms as "Kadampa" and "Sakyapa" for styles).[18] In this he was following in part Tucci (1949) and Trungpa (1975), who each used one or two religious school names for painting styles.

Most subsequent scholars have, with good reason, been reluctant to confuse stylistic trends with religious school names. (A master from a single religious school could and sometimes did patronize more than one painting style, and one and the same painter could also work in more than one

style. Painting styles and religious schools were thus only partly coextensive at best.) Pal discussed the artists at some length in general terms (pp. 4ff.). On the origins of the traditional styles, he repeated (p. 129) the mistake of Macdonald and Vergati Stahl (1979), with further modifications:

> According to the Tibetan scholastic tradition, at least three schools of painting flourished in eastern Tibet during the sixteenth century. One of these developed in Dege and was known as Man ris. A second school of painting was begun by one Jamyang Khyentse (b. 1524) and came to be known as Khyen ris. The third school was originated with one Namka Tashi and was known as Karma Gadri. However, very little is said about the characteristics of these styles, and hence it is extremely difficult to relate them to existing paintings.

He also repeats twice (pp. 5 and 131) an erroneous tradition to the effect that the 8th Karma-pa Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje inspired the founding of the Karma-sgar-bris.[19] Considering the chronological difficulties he faced, it is little wonder that Pal in practice virtually ignored the traditional categories.

Regarding individual painters, Pal referred (pp. 50ff.) to the occasional occurrence of inscriptions naming artists, including the case of a painting by a certain rGyal-po-dpal-seng, namely painting P5 of the catalogue.[20] He also mentioned or discussed several famous lamas who were actively involved in the production of sacred art, especially different incarnations of the Karma-pa.

M. M. RHIE AND R. A. F. THURMAN (1984)

Marylin M. Rhie and Robert A. F. Thurman in their first exhibition catalogue (pp. 22f.) discerned four main regional styles by the 18th and 19th centuries (Eastern, Western, Central, and Nepalese?), and they too found the "pinnacle" of Tibetan painting in the Central Tibetan sMan-ris style of the mid to late 17th century, linking its emergence to the seizure of temporal supremacy by the 5th Dalai Lama and the latter's construction of the Potala palace.[21] It should be noted, however, that the (Old) sMan-ris had originally emerged as early as the mid 15th century in the work of sMan-bla-don-grub, who seems to have been active mainly in gTsang province, though his tradition quickly spread also to many parts of dBus. They also mention the Karma-sgar-bris of eastern Tibet and the fact that there were cases of mutual influence between the styles:

> In Central Tibet around the area of Lhasa where the great Gelukpa monasteries were flourishing, a style termed "Menri" emerged. It is full-bodied, powerful and energetic, employing solid, vivid colors, especially orange-red and green. Though there is a certain degree of Chinese influence here as well, it is mainly in the orange/green coloring and the gold floral patterns on the textiles. The dramatic power of this style reflects the strong mastery of Tibet by the Dalai Lama from the center around Lhasa at this time. This style is used in decorating the walls of Drepung Monastery (the largest monastery in the world) and the Potala Palace, from the second half of the 17th century (see *The World of Tibetan Buddhism*, Tokyo, 1982, and *The Potala Palace of Tibet*, Shanghai, 1982). It represents a fully developed synthesis emerging into a spectacular, truly Tibetan style about the time of the 5th Dalai Lama and the construction of the Potala.
>
> There are many variant styles of these four main regional styles in the 18th-19th centuries, but the most flourishing and prominent are those of the Menri in central Tibet (spreading also to other areas with the energetic Gelukpa building of monasteries) and the Karmagardri in eastern Tibet, both of which came to interrelate with each other in the complex milieu of later Tibetan painting, a subject which still awaits thorough study.

A. LAVIZZARI-RAEUBER (1984)

The book by Lavizzari-Raeuber which appeared in German in the Dumont Taschenbücher series was evidently conceived of as a handbook for a wide readership and not as a work of carefully documented scholarship. The author (pp. 81f.) presented a sketch of traditional styles, probably derived from Smith (1970) by way of Macdonald and Vergati Stahl (1979), but gave no indication of the source of her information.[22]

M. ARIS (1985)

Michael Aris, in his book review of two works by P. Pal (1983 and 1984), briefly alluded to the subject of stylistic identifications, stating that Pal has paid "very little attention ... to indigenous classifications of style, and although these are generally cryptic and elusive, one feels they should have provided the proper starting point." He stressed the importance of referring directly to the

various relevant branches of Tibetan literature—canonical, liturgical, iconometric and historical—and rightly pointed out the need "to examine Tibetan painting first from the perspectives of the literate culture that gave it birth." This need not imply, of course, that other approaches have no usefulness for the study of Tibetan cultural and art history. Indeed, a wide and diversely based approach is usually the most successful.[23]

J. C. HUNTINGTON (1985)

John C. Huntington's contribution entitled "Book Review and Discussion of the Problem of Style in Tibetan Painting" is a review of P. Pal (1984) that also included a more detailed discussion of the problem of stylistic identifications. He criticized Pal's vague category of "Kadampa," pointing out (p. 50) that in the period included (the 12th–14th centuries), a number of Tibetan Buddhist traditions were in existence.[24] Then he proposed, with qualifications, a "Nyingmapa" category, stating that any thangka pre-dating about the year 1000 must be, axiomatically, proto-rNying-ma-pa.[25] In most cases, however, it would probably be more useful simply to identify and trace in as much detail as possible the particular lineages or traditions that such early works embody.[26] Huntington also suggested a different term for the Pāla-influenced Tibetan style of the 12th through 14th centuries:[27]

> For paintings designated by Pal as Kadampa, I prefer the perhaps more academic but certainly more accurate Tibetan characterization Shar mThun-'bris (pronounced Sharthunri), literally, 'drawing [style] agreeing with the east[ern Indian style]'. This term is used by knowledgeable Tibetans to designate aspects of the stylistic category Pal proposes.

Apparently Huntington drew this hypothetical term from Smith's account (1970) of the styles of Indian Buddhist (and here especially Newar) art according to Kong-sprul, perhaps by way of Ngawang Gelek Demo's catalogue (1979).[28]

In his article, Huntington used or mentioned again all the terms he had employed previously (I correct the spellings): Bal-bris (Beri), sMan-bris (Menri), sMan-ris gsar-ma (Menri sarma), Karma-sgar-bris (Karma gardri), mKhyen-ris (Khyenri), mKhyen-ris gsar-ma (Khyenri sarma), "Guge school," and the "Lhasa style" which became the "Tibetan international school" of the 18th through 20th centuries. He mentioned (p. 55) two important painters, giving new and more specific dates for each: "sMan Lha [*sic*] don-grub, 1440-ca. 1510?," and "Chos-dbyings rGya-mtsho, 1645-ca. 1715?"—though without specifying his sources. On the Karma-sgar-bris style in general he ventured the following useful points (p. 53):

> ...The presence of sized but un-grounded and un-painted support as part of the pictorial area; the use of aerial perspective in a manner related to Chinese painting, especially the distant mountains; the heavy reliance on archaizing Chinese landscape forms ...; meticulous attention to the minor details of the painting by an extremely skilled miniaturist; the consistent use of very finely prepared pigments; completely arbitrary use of vignetting as a compositional device to set off subunits of the composition; and a general close relationship to the 'Blue-Green' schools of China.

Huntington also contributed several valuable general observations, such as (on pp. 50 and 56) about the difficulty of making regional attributions and (on p. 51) the need for more careful attention to the material aspects (i.e. methods and materials). He defended the value of stylistic analysis in its own right (addressing what he perceived to be a critique from "Tibetologists" who are not art historians), while advocating himself (pp. 54-56) a variety of other lines of investigation which should be followed to arrive at a more complete attribution of a given painting, namely: iconology,[29] iconography, hagiography, historical context, anthropological factors, and regional stylistic considerations.[30] (He might have added iconometry, for there existed different traditions of proportions by which deities were drawn, though indeed in many cases this is difficult to ascertain from a painting.[31]) Finally he mentioned with regret the general lack of knowledge about the religious history of particular works of art: which religious master commissioned it, for instance, or what extraordinary events were associated with it. This too is an important point, and it is one of the reasons no stone should be left unturned in trying

to decipher and interpret the inscriptions on a painting and in trying to identify the specific historical figures and lineages portrayed.[32]

E. F. Lo Bue (1986)

In his review of P. Pal (1983) published in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, the Italian scholar Erberto F. Lo Bue devoted close attention to this catalogue of a collection that includes some of the most significant paintings brought out of Tibet to Italy by Tucci in the 1930s (and then sold by him in the late 1950s). With respect to Pal's attempt to classify by attributing paintings and styles to geographical regions, specific monasteries and religious orders, Lo Bue writes:

> The adoption of this double approach is a problem in itself, for all Tibetan religious orders established and decorated monasteries throughout Tibet, while the same artist could travel long distances and paint on commission in the same style at various places. For example, the definition of a central or western Tibetan style seems to imply that there were styles or schools of art common to specific areas irrespective of the religious affiliation of the various monasteries. On the other hand, if we subscribe to the suggestion that the Karma *sgar-'bris* [sic] style is to be associated with eastern Tibet and Kham in particular, then how can we account for its presence in Karma-pa monasteries in areas of Tibet and the Himālayas other than eastern Tibet? And how can we explain the fact that certain iconographic subjects, such as of the popular set of the 16 or 18 *sthaviras*, appear to be portrayed in a Chinese-influenced style in different regions and irrespective of the religious order for which they may have been produced? Pal does not answer such questions and, by introducing two parallel criteria of evaluation, does not solve the contradictions that their very coexistence implies. Nor does he make any attempt to link Tibetan artistic productions to the various traditional styles and schools as described in Tibetan texts.

The basic points of Lo Bue's critique are correct, but we should not forget that Tucci himself in his classic work *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (1949) had also felt compelled to employ a similarly miscellaneous and not always mutually exclusive set of descriptive categories. Moreover, it can be a useful exercise to group paintings according to religious tradition and lineage, which allows one then to see the development of styles against a less variable iconographic background. But such an exercise also makes clear the futility of identifying religious schools too closely with painting styles, which was precisely Lo Bue's point.

V. Reynolds, A. Heller and J. Gyatso (1986)

This catalogue to the sculpture and painting in the Newark Museum Tibetan collection is a much revised edition superseding the original work of Eleanor Olson (1971). Assisting V. Reynolds in writing the catalogue were A. Heller, the source for most of the information on styles and iconography, and J. Gyatso, who assisted with translations and advised on more technical Tibetological and Buddhological questions.

Part 4 of the introductory chapter is entitled "The Formation and Spread of Tibetan Styles, Fifteenth to Twentieth Centuries." Here one finds an intelligent attempt to describe later Tibetan stylistic developments while at the same time incorporating the traditional accounts (mainly based on Smith [1970]). But as with other similar efforts, Smith's chronology has made it impossible to reach a correct understanding and has led the authors to consider for instance that the Nepalese artist notebook dated 1435 could represent the sMan-ris style. (This notebook could, however, give some indications about one immediate forerunner to the early sMan-ris.) Regarding the mKhyen-ris, it is to the authors' credit that they noted (p. 25, n. 48) Smith's own uncertainty about the mKhyen-ris school's founder, etc., being the first secondary source explicitly to do so.

The authors also astutely noticed regarding painting 13, which depicts scenes from the Avadāna Kalpalatā stories, the presence of Mughal turbans and robes, and from this they inferred the possibility of contact with Mughal India via Kashmir or Nepal. The authors remark later (p. 158) on the problems involved in identifying the painting as Karma-sgar-bris (here following Pal 1984). (They also helpfully allude on p. 158, n. 5, to several other paintings in other museums and collections which were from the same "atelier.") But the above problem of classification can be resolved by the knowledge that this composition originated from the workshop of Si-

tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas, who in the mid 18th century was avidly propagating a revised sGar-bris style from his monasteries in Khams. And indeed Si-tu Paṇ-chen (who had visited Nepal in person) is known to have consciously attempted to introduce Indian and Nepalese elements into the paintings he planned and commissioned, especially in paintings of this very set of Avadāna stories, as will be described in more detail below. The painting cannot possibly date to before the 1730s, and in fact it probably is a still later copy.

Though the book could have benefitted from additional refinement in its treatment of post-1450 styles, in general its scholarship was quite solid, combining as it did intensive attention to both art-historical questions and the relevant written sources (and not neglecting to seek the help of learned Tibetans when possible). In fact, it set a new standard for museum catalogues of Tibetan collections.

G.-W. ESSEN AND T. T. THINGO (1989); AND R. GOEPPER (1989)

The very competent catalogue of the private Essen collection by G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989) includes (vol. 1, pp. 12-13) a brief sketch of the origins of the main traditional schools by Roger Goepper. The section is entitled "Die Wurzeln der religiösen Kunst Tibets" (The Roots of the Religious Art of Tibet), and in one passage it states:[33]

> The roots from which the complex phenomena of Tibetan art grew up between the 8th and 14th centuries A.D. can be understood relatively clearly, though here the native tradition, which is interspersed with legend, must be separated from the historical facts. Thus, for example, the Tibetan texts attribute a reputedly Chinese-inspired painting tradition, the so-called Gadri school, to artists whom a Chinese princess, one of the two consorts of the king Songtsan Gampo, brought with her from China in the middle of the 7th century. The southern or Nepalese painting tradition, the Menri (sMan-bris), was introduced in the 2nd half of the 9th century from Nepal, which borders Tibet on the south. From that tradition there then developed the "New" Menri school (Mensar, sMan-gsar) in the 17th century. Finally the Karma-Gadri school (Karma-sgar-bris), which emerged in about 1500 and which still exists today, united within itself stylistic elements from three lands: Indian forms, with Chinese colors and textures, as well as Tibetan compositional techniques. Also many of the artists mentioned in the Tibetan literary works must be considered as legendary.

Presumably the "Tibetan texts" or "literary works" from which Goepper drew his conclusions were a single main source: the recent manual of the Gling-tshang Karma-sgar-bris artist Gega Lama (1983).[34] Therefore Goepper probably had the latter account in mind when making his final remarks, and the "legendary" artists he alluded to must be those of India or of the earliest period of Tibetan Buddhism. There is, of course, no reason to consider as legendary any artists mentioned in contemporaneous or nearly contemporaneous Tibetan written sources, such as a 15th-century painter mentioned in a 15th-century biography or history. Goepper, p. 13, gives a sketch of the penetration of Chinese influences, finding two particular high points: (1) in the reign of the Ming emperor Yongle (r. 1403–1424), and, still stronger, during (2) the reign of the Manchu emperor Qianlong (r. 1736–1796).

In the body of volume one, which is the volume containing the plates (Tafelband), the co-authors Essen and Thingo make some valuable attributions to specific painters, sometimes on good modern authority, though in each case without any further written documentation. A smoke-darkened Green Tārā (vol. 1, p. 88, pl. 49), for example, was said by the late 16th Karma-pa to have probably been the work of Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas.[35] A painting on gold-colored silk with Padmasambhava as the main figure (vol. 1, p. 108, pl. 64) is said to "bear the artistic signature" of the 10th Karma-pa Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje (1604–1674). (In many respects this work is stylistically almost identical to another thangka in the collection, a painting which is said to depict the nearly contemporaneous Zhwa-dmar Gar-dbang Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug [1584–1630], but which in fact shows one of the Si-tu incarnations; see vol. 1, p. 142 [no. I 85 =II 246].) Finally, three paintings belonging to a set depicting the Karma bka'-brgyud lineage of teachers (vol. 1, pp. 143-45, pls. 86-88) are said to have

been by one Kar-shod mGon-po-rdo-rje, "a contemporary of the 8th Zhwa-dmar-pa (1695–1732) and meditation master of his order," though documentary evidence is lacking for such an early dating.

Volume two of this work, the systematic inventory (Bestandskatalog) of the collection, contains still more fascinating references. One of the valuable fruits of the collaboration between the co-authors is their proficient treatment of the inscriptions, which in every case are noted, recorded and translated.[36] If the descriptions have a single notable deficiency, it is that they often fail to indicate clearly the ordering of the figures in the sequence that was intended (i.e. the figures are not numbered according to the order of the lineage or other sequence portrayed).

In addition to another work attributed to Si-tu Paṇ-chen by modern tradition (vol. 2, p. 95, pl. 205: 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po), at least seven other thangkas bear inscriptions identifying the painters:[37]

(II 7 = I 7) Bar-spong mDo-sde-dpal-bzang ("southwest Tibet, ca. 1700?")
(II 85 = I 26) sPang-lung dKon-mchog-phan-dar ("Ladakh, 14th-15th c.")
(II 103 = I 31) rNal-'byor-rdo-rje (17th c.)
(II 229) bSam-grub-phun-tshogs ("southern Tibet, 17th c.")
(II 284 = I 95) bSam-grub (not "Ngödrup"; "Ladakh, 15th c.")
(II 338) Chos-kyi-snang-ba ("eastern Tibet, 18th c.")
(II 451) dPang-lung Nges-don ("Dolpo, 18th c.")

It should be noted that the sixth name just listed, Chos-kyi-snang-ba (pl. II 338), was one of the names of Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas.[38] A further painter is named in the inscription of a single-thangka depiction of the mahāsiddhas (vol. 2, p. 70, pl. 148): "Khri-las-ta-'dzin," which is probably a misspelling of the name Phrin-las-bstan-'dzin (and not Phrin-las-rta-mgrin). Still other inscriptions identify the patrons or the previous owners of the paintings (see, for instance, vol. 2, pp. 228, 284, 315, 367, 400, and 403), or they mention special events or materials used in connection with the creation of the thangka (vol. 2, p. 398). Oddly enough, none of the names of these artists are listed in the otherwise quite extensive index (vol. 2, pp. 302-307)! The very useful results of Essen and Thingo suffice to show the absolute necessity of recording and treating the inscriptions when cataloguing Tibetan works of art.

JAMPAL KUNZANG RECHUNG (1990)

This article by J. K. Rechung Rinpoche contains (pp. 57-8) a brief section on the great Tibetan painters. Although the author has not specified his source for this information, it was no doubt drawn from the writings of Kong-sprul, from the *Shes bya kun khyab* encyclopedia to be exact.[39] This article seems to be a reworking of a previous piece entitled "A Short Study of the Origins and Evolution of Different Styles of Buddhist Paintings and Iconography," which appeared seventeen years earlier in the *Bulletin of Tibetology* (vol. 10-2, 1973), though no clear indication is given of this.

In the first article, Rechung Rinpoche gave no bibliography of the "manuscripts" upon which he based his study, but he did indicate his sources more precisely in the notes. These two articles are far more valuable for the information they give on Buddhist sculpture, presenting as they do traditional accounts drawn from the writings of Padma-dkar-po, Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho and 'Jigs-med-gling-pa. Rechung did not cite the previous work of Smith, Huntington or any others, but from the chronology he gave in the later version (sMan-thang-pa 1440; Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis, 1500 [?]; and gTsang-pa Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho, 1645) one can see he was not working in a complete vacuum. His renderings into English are mostly adequate. On some points his translation of Kong-sprul's account is an improvement, such as in recognizing the "si-thang" seen by sMan-bla-don-grub to be a Chinese painting. There are, however, some lapses, such as his statement ([1973], p. 8; [1990], p. 57) that "sMan-thang chen-mo" was the name of a great thangka that sMan-thang-pa painted.

J. C. HUNTINGTON (1990)

The most recent summary of traditional painting styles by John C. Huntington is found in an extensive catalogue he co-authored (with Susan L. Huntington) for an exhibition of Pāla art from India and its neighboring countries. In part III of the catalogue, "The Pāla Legacy Abroad: The Transmission to Nepal, Tibet and China," he discussed at length the identification and description of the stylistic schools, first carefully summarizing the available traditional Tibetan sources on Indian and Tibetan Buddhist art ("Introduction to Tibet and China," pp. 281-307), and then attempting to integrate the traditional categories into a modern perspective. Finally he discussed the role of sectarian affiliations in the determination of style.

In the opening lines (p. 281), Huntington implied that a "technical awareness of styles and of the influence of different stylistic traditions on Tibetan painting" was part of the tradition received by traditionally trained artists in Tibet, basing himself on a passage from Gega Lama's book.[40] Though contemporary master artists indeed have no trouble identifying the main modern styles and can see at a glance a stronger or weaker presence of Chinese or Newar influences in a painting, most I have met are at a loss to identify early examples of the main indigenous styles, just as Huntington himself (p. 299) pointed out. In fact, the account of Gega Lama was for the most part not based on any direct oral transmission of artist lore, but rather was taken from the traditional written sources.[41] Among Tibetans, the identification of *early* styles was for the most part the province of scholar-connoisseurs, and it was not usually the concern of ordinary practicing artists.[42]

A prominent feature of Huntington's account is the usage of the hypothetical term **shar mthun ris* for the Pāla- or East-Indian influenced styles of Tibet. As mentioned above, this term is not to my knowledge attested within the Tibetan learned tradition, and it seems to derive in modern times from a footnote in E. G. Smith's introduction to Kong-sprul's encyclopedia (1970), which was repeated by Ngawang Gelek Demo (1979), p. 2. Huntington elsewhere recognized that modern Tibetan oral tradition is often entirely inadequate as a basis for detailed discussion of early Tibetan styles,[43] and he acknowledged quite clearly (p. 288) that Tāranātha or Kong-sprul or some other closely related written source must have been the basis for the oral accounts he received. Yet in this case (p. 287) he elected to follow "oral Tibetan tradition" and "to discuss the early paintings in terms of their relationships to Shar mthun ris," or "to use the Tibetan terminology and refer to the whole as Shar mthun ris." If the term **shar mthun ris* was indeed ever used by modern Tibetan informants, it was probably as a neologism drawn ultimately from Kong-sprul's discussion of Newar painting; indeed, this apparently was a case of modern Western scholarship (Smith's study of Kong-sprul) having had a reverse influence on "the tradition."[44] Here, if a Tibetan term is really needed for the Pāla style of eastern India, one could use simply *shar gyi bzo* ("eastern art") or *shar ris* ("eastern painting"), as Huntington sometimes does elsewhere (e.g. p. 296).

Huntington further uses the terminology of *bris* for "painting" and *sku* for "sculpture." This pair of terms is understandable in loose conversational usage, and it evidently derives from a passage in Tāranātha's history (see Huntington, p. 286). But strictly speaking, *sku* ("sacred bodily image, form, or body") is the wider term of the two, and all types of sacred art, including paintings (*bris sku*, "painted sacred image"), silken images (*gos sku*), and sculpted figures (*'bur sku, sku 'dra*), are sub-types of *sku*. In other words, in the traditional nomenclature the distinction is not between *bris* and *sku*, but between *bris* (pictorial art, *ri mo*) and *'bur* (three-dimensional, plastic arts).[45] Sculptures have various sub-types depending on the main material or method used for making them, for instance: *'jim sku* ("clay image," the material being actually something closer to papier maché), *blugs sku* ("cast-metal image"), *gser sku* ("gold or gilt copper [*gser zangs*] image"), etc.

Huntington's treatment of the later indigenous Tibetan schools here is relatively brief, for his main subject is the early and heavily Indian-influ-



Fig. 3. The sage Ātreya. Drawing by the contemporary Tibetan artist Mig-dmar in Dharamsala, India.

enced Tibetan styles. When discussing the main later indigenous styles, he clearly specified the hypothetical nature of his stylistic identifications. On the sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris, he stated (p. 299): "No documentary or other direct evidence illustrates the features that can identify paintings of either the sMan bris or mKhyen ris schools." Though the situation is daunting, it is however perhaps not quite as intractable as Huntington implied, since works of mKhyen-brtse's tradition, for example, survive in Tibet *in situ*, and a few other identifications can be made.

Huntington went on to draw the following inferences from the traditional accounts:

> ... From the brief narrative of sMan's contributions, it would seem that his alteration of the accepted Bal bris style was a major departure from the norm. From the even briefer description of the contribution of mKhyen ..., active in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, it would seem that he followed the direction of sMan in adding Chinese elements but also went further.

Chronologically this is not accurate, for as noted above, sMan-thang-pa and mKhyen-brtse were contemporaries. (mKhyen-brtse and Bye'u were probably not followers of sMan-thang-pa.) It is also slightly misleading to state (p. 289) that both were gTsang painters—they were both natives of dBus province, having been born in Lho-brag and Lho-kha, respectively—unless what is meant is that they learned how to paint in gTsang.[46] Huntington also asserted (p. 299) that no sculptures were produced by the schools founded by sMan-thang-pa and mKhyen-brtse, though in fact mKhyen-brtse was at least as famous as a sculptor as he was as a painter (as will be described below).

Huntington (p. 300f.) elucidated, furthermore, the correct meaning of the term *(Karma) sGar-bris*, though not clarifying that *sgar* "encampment" is a different word from *sga* ("saddle," "sGa region," etc.).[47] He also asserted that the "Karma Encampment Style" too produced no sculptures, though this contradicts the Karma

bKa-brgyud written sources, which record the names of several of their own greatest sculptors.[48] Therefore, though Huntington has contributed a number of worthwhile observations, the paucity of his sources has limited what he could say about the main later indigenous styles.

C. DEWEIRT, E. GANDIA AND M. MONIEZ (1991)

The recent book *Le Tibet* by C. Deweirt, E. Gandia and M. Moniez contains in sections 1.5-1.5.5 a brief classification of painting styles. The authors have here followed P. Pal (1984). The main styles number five, and they are based variously on religious schools, region, content and period: (1) the Kadampa style, (2) the Sakyapa style, (3) the Guge style, (4) the landscape style, and (5) the style characteristic of the 17th–19th centuries.

M. M. RHIE AND R. A. F. THURMAN (1991)

An important recent contribution is that of Marylin M. Rhie and Robert A. F. Thurman, who joined forces to write an exhibition catalogue entitled *Wisdom and Compassion.*[49] The section of the book devoted to the study of styles was written by Marylin M. Rhie, and it was entitled "Tibetan Buddhist Art: Aesthetics, Chronology, and Styles" (pp. 39-66). It contains a useful essay on stylistic trends, broken down almost century by century and region by region (dividing Tibet into three main zones: West, Central and East). Rhie employs some of the traditional stylistic categories in descriptions of the periods from the 16th century onward. For example (p. 59): "In Eastern Tibet the rise of the Karma Gadri style of painting, known from written sources as a major Tibetan artistic style and associated with the Karmapa branch of the Kagyu Order, arises in the second half of the 16th century." It should be noted, however, that the main known sites of the work of the school's founder, Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis, were in dBus province of Central Tibet.

The following are just a few further remarks in connection with Rhie's mentions of the traditional styles. She stated that most of the major artists working in this style were Karma bKa-brgyud-pas in Khams and A-mdo.[50] She added several useful comments on the relation of the sGar-bris to middle and later Ming painting in the 17th and 18th centuries (p. 63). She also mentioned (p. 61) "the emergence of the 'New Menri' style, which is said to have been initiated by Chöying Gyatso (active 1620–1665), who worked for the First Panchen Lama and later became the painter for the Fifth Dalai Lama in Lhasa, where this style flourished." She added (p. 62): "Emerging at the time when the Fifth Dalai Lama was asserting commanding leadership for Tibet in the political, religious and cultural spheres, it developed not only into a national Tibetan style, but eventually into an international one."[51] But as already alluded to above, Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho only worked briefly for the 5th Dalai Lama and seems to have had his main immediate impact in gTsang at the court of the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che. Rhie (like Huntington) referred to the latter Central Tibetan sMan-ris style of the 17th and 18th centuries as the "Tibetan international style."[52] But this Lhasa or dBus-province style which went "international" does not seem to have been primarily a direct continuation of the sMan-gsar style of gTsang-pa Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho.

V. CHAN (1994)

The hefty traveller's handbook and pilgrimage guide compiled by Victor Chan gives invaluable help to those wishing to visit the vestiges of religious art in central and western Tibet, including not only those located in the main inhabited centers but also in very remote areas. As a guide to Tibetan art styles the book is also useful, having been written in some sections with the help of Roberto Vitali. But for its description of the "later" (i.e. post-15th-century) styles, the account has some gaps and weaknesses. In the section "A Short History of Tibetan Art" (pp. 47-57) one finds the following presentation and classification chiefly according to historical periods:

1. The Yarlung Period (7th-9th Century)
2. The Second Diffusion of Buddhism (11th–12th Century)
3. The Sakyapa Style (14th–16th Century)
4. Birth of Local Styles (15th–16th Century): A. The Latö School, B. The Gyantse School, and C. The Guge School.

5. The Rule of the Dalai Lamas (17th–19th Century)

The final four or five centuries of Tibetan painting are presented as having consisted mainly of the spreading throughout Tibet of a generally uniform "Central Tibetan landscape genre," i.e. of the sMan-ris of dBus province (pp. 56-57):

> An art style called Üri emanated from Lhasa, a consolidation of past influences. Beginning in the 16th C., the murals of monasteries all across the country were painted in a much more uniform manner. This standardization was applied with equal zeal from Ngari Khorsum in West Tibet to the Chinese borders in the East. Vestiges of the Newari-Sakyapa style, however, can be seen on the walls of some of Central Tibet's monuments. The same can be said of the modified Pala style, often called the Kadampa style.
>
> In the age of the Dalai Lamas, the landscape tradition, imported from China as early as the 14th C., grew in importance. This was China's fundamental contribution to Tibetan painting. Landscapes now became an integral part of the painter's repertoire and displaced the strongly figural styles that marked the Indo-Nepalese works. Natural forms appeared in all subjects. For example, the background of many murals, especially depicting lamas and deities, now featured elements such as skies, clouds and snowy mountains. In time, these landscapes became static and ossified when compared to the superb, creative murals of Shalu and Gyantse. Many more architectural subjects, such as monasteries and hermitages, were painted during the 17th and 18th centuries.

There is of course a substantial basis for most of Chan's observations, but as we know, the stylistic revolution referred to here (the introduction of Chinese landscapes in the background) really took root as a widespread movement already in the mid or late 15th century, and this was by no means a primarily Lhasa- or dBus-province-based phenomena. For its dating and descriptions of a minor style such as the mKhyen-ris (p. 479f.), moreover, Chan's book is less reliable. No doubt these sections will be "fine-tuned" in the later editions that this irreplaceable book will surely live to see.

A. Chayet (1994)

The last contribution on painting styles to be summarized here appeared in the recent book by Anne Chayet, which is the most comprehensive account to date of Tibetan art and artifacts, including as it does within its scope even architecture and archaeology.[53] In its treatment of Tibetan Buddhist art, the book represents a serious attempt to take into account systematically and consistently the point of view of the Tibetan tradition. The Tibetans' own aesthetic and religious conceptions are seen as one of the keys to opening up this art to foreigners (see chapter III, "Savoir, art et œuvre au Tibet," and also pp. 189-193). As a first step, the author attempts to lay bare the typical attitudes and preconceptions of Western investigators in the past, giving a very useful sketch of the development of knowledge about Tibetan art in Europe from the time of the first tentative reports in the 12th century (Chapter 1, *Découverte de l'art tibétain*).[54]

On the subject of the traditional painting styles, Chayet highlights the contributions of Tucci (1949) and Smith (1970).[55] In a brief section on the "modern schools" (Écoles modernes, pp. 184-188) she gives a thoughtful summary of the received traditions (mainly Smith 1970), noting like many others the difficulty of applying the traditional classifications to known examples. She then touches on the theme of Chinese influence (p. 185), and goes on to describe briefly the Karma-sgar-bris tradition (pp. 185 and 188) and the impact of the arrival of dGe-lugs-pa power on styles (p. 188). In a previous discussion of the artist and his role (p. 165), she had already observed:

> Les noms des artistes n'ont jamais été répertoriés systématiquement, comme ils l'ont été en Occident, à date relativement récente il est vrai. Chroniques et biographies nous assurent cependant de la grande notoriété de certains d'entre eux, et les inscriptions, on l'a vu, indiquent bon nombre de leurs noms. On pourrait songer à en constituer un corpus, tâche considérable, car les textes où de telles informations peuvent se trouver sont très nombreux et dépourvus d'index, et d'un intérêt limité par le fait que la plupart des noms recueillis ne pourraient être associés à une image. On peut espérer peut-être davantage des oeuvres identifiées par une inscription....

She mentions the privileged case of the 15th-century Gyantse murals where so many inscriptions are to be found. But then she immediately notes that even here one's interpretations regard-

ing individual painters are limited by the fact that many murals were probably composite works (of not only a master but also his pupils) and by the fact that successive later restorations may have taken place.

It is true that the interpretation of such inscriptions can entail various difficulties for the researcher. But the main problem, it seems to me, is simply that not enough of them have yet been gathered and carefully investigated. One thing is sure: since inscriptions are the main means for identifying the individual patrons, lamas and painters involved in the production and completion of a painting, no preliminary difficulties entailed in their study and interpretation will diminish in the long run their importance for Tibetan art history.

Chayet's study represents in several ways an advance in methodology, but her account of the history of painters and styles (like those of most researchers before her) was limited by the restricted number of original historical writings utilized. In some ways the study of Tibetan art history had reached an impasse, and this clearly was sensed by the author herself. In the section immediately following her discussion of styles, she sketches the prospects for future research (Perspectives de recherche, pp. 188-193). Here she recaps the development of Western research (cf. also p. 8) and sums up its present predicament. As she points out, after a first phase of study when iconography was its main concern, the Western study of Tibetan art has in its second phase (since Tucci) been concentrating in addition on the study of styles. But while some progress has been made on those subjects: "...La question qui se pose en général avec le plus d'acuité est celle des datations."

In other words, one of the main things holding back the field from significant progress is the great difficulty in placing more paintings within a firm and well-documented historical background. Here stylistic comparisons are very important as a first step towards identifying the tradition and general period, but for chronological purposes such comparisons are, strictly speaking, only as good as the most securely dated painting that is being compared. For attaining the more accurate chronology that is aimed for here, one has no alternative but to turn first to the paintings themselves for whatever inscriptions and for whatever other clues of internal evidence they may possess (e.g. depictions of otherwise datable historical figures), and then secondly to whatever relevant external evidence can be found in the broader historical record (e.g. in historical accounts regarding the artist, patron or their traditions). This method is the only one that will be able to uncover the chronological signposts that have been lacking until now for a more detailed history of styles. Of course this procedure can only work when such additional chronological clues are in fact available. Moreover, such evidence should be interpreted by someone who is very familiar with the history of the particular religious tradition that produced the work of art. But given the richness and depth of the Tibetan historical record and the fairly frequent occurrence of inscriptions, there is every reason to hope for success with many important works of art.

* * *

It may be that I have overlooked in the foregoing sketch a few other Western studies treating Tibetan painting styles.[56] There has been an explosion of publications on Tibetan art in the last twenty years, and it is hard to keep track of them all. Even so the foregoing should suffice, for as one can see from the above survey the great majority of such studies are derivative and do not add anything new, at least regarding the great painters and their traditions. Since the work of Smith (1970), hardly anyone has gone back to take another look at the original Tibetan sources.

Notes

[4] For a sketch of the discovery and reception of Tibetan art and culture among Westerners from as early as the 12th century, see A. Chayet (1994), pp. 11-20, and also J. Casey Singer (1994).

[5] Before this, S. C. Das (1908) had already referred to more than one great Tibetan artist in his index to part one of Sum-pa mkhan-po's history of Buddhism, the *dPag bsam ljon bzang*, but the form of names he cited made them unrecognizable and unusable, as when he listed sMan-thang-pa under "'Jam-dbyangs." In one case at least Das was not to blame, for his text was corrupt, leading him to list Gong-dkar mKhyen-brtse under "Gos-dmar."

[6] A big step forward has, however, been taken with the recent publication of E. De Rossi Filibeck, *Catalogue of the Tucci Tibetan Fund in the Library of the IsMEO*, vol. 1, Rome, 1994. This describes only the collected works in the collection.

[7] Subsequently he devoted a small study to an indigenous description of Indian Buddhist sculpture that he had found in the writings of Padma-dkar-po. See Tucci (1959) and more recently L. S. Dagyab (1977), pp. 51ff., and Jampal Kunzang Rechung (1990).

[8] G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. vii.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 208. Some page numbers seem to be wrong (through printing mistakes?), for instance, p. 49 instead of f. 149b, and p. 351 instead of f. 352. Two other references I could not locate at all were given as vol. 1, f. 189, and vol. 2, f. 182.

[10] For an appraisal of his contributions see also A. Chayet (1994), pp. 19 and 177.

[11] On his contributions see also A. Chayet (1994), pp. 20 and 177.

[12] It may well be that mKhyen-brtse-dbang-phyug did some painting himself. See Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor* (1991), vol. 2, p. 169, where it is mentioned that at the enthronement of 'Dar-pa lo-tsā-ba (in 1669/70), the 5th Dalai Lama received a painting of the goddess Nā-ro mkha'-spyod-ma by 'Jam-dbyangs mKhyen-brtse (*'jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i phyag bris ma*). This and two other thangkas of the Cycle of Three Red Deities (*dmar po skor gsum*) had been the possessions of Tshar-chen Blo-gsal-rgya-mtsho or his main disciples, and later were the venerated possessions of 'Dar-pa Rin-cen-dpal-bzang. Could the artist who painted the first thangka have been Tshar-chen's great disciple mKhyen-brtse'i-dbang-phyug, and not the famous Gong-dkar mKhyen-brtse? Also in about 1668/69, the 5th Dalai Lama received from rGyal-rtse-ba bdag-po Byams-pa-ngag-dbang-bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1598?–1674?, 20th abbot of Ngor) a thangka of rDo-ring-pa that similarly had been owned by the latter's chief disciple, Tshar-chen. See Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor* (1991), vol. 2, p. 134.

[13] In *Aspects of Indian Art* (1972), pp. 105-117.

[14] As was also noted by Dejin Zangmo in her book review, *Tibetan Review*, vol. 13-8 (Aug. 1978), p. 19.

[15] Here Huntington wrongly spelled or explained some of the terms. For instance, the correct spellings are *bris* or *ris* instead of *'bris*; *gsar ma* instead of *ser ma*; and *sgar* ("encampment") instead of *sga* ("sGa district").

[16] It should be noted that for Tibetan metal sculpture, U. von Schroeder (1981) had already established the presentation of inscriptions as a standard procedure.

[17] For a critique of this method of classification, see E. Lo Bue (1986) as quoted below. This work is also reviewed or discussed in M. Aris (1985), J. C. Huntington (1985) and D. Jackson (1990). For Pal (1983) there also exists an enlarged second edition (Los Angeles, 1990).

[18] It is of course acceptable to use the term "Sa-skya-pa period" for the time of Sa-skya/Yüan political rule in Tibet (ca. 1250–1350). But a "Sa-skya-pa style" is a very different thing.

[19] Karma Thinley (1980), p. 94: "...[Mikyo Dorje] inspired the Karma Gadri movement in art through his work in this field." See also the similar statement in C. Trungpa (1975), p. 16.

[20] See also the inscription to P21, p. 262, the end of which seems to mention two painters: [bsTan?-] 'dzin-bkra-shis [?] and rDzong-kha bKra-shis, though the first two characters of the relevant lines are illegible.

[21] The finding of a great turning point in Tibetan religious art history in the assimilation of Chinese styles concomitant with the gaining of political supremacy by the Dalai Lamas was originally postulated by G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 272, though he specified the 18th century: "Before China in the XVIIIth century renewed Tibet's pictorial traditions through the triumph of the Dalai Lamas and then through political submission, ruling from the great monasteries of Lha-sa and Tashilhunpo or irradiating from the eastern provinces, Nepalese arts and crafts held undisputed sway." See also Macdonald and Vergati Stahl (1979), p. 33. For another sketch of the origins of Tibetan Buddhist art by one of the co-authors, see Marylin M. Rhie (1984).

[22] The illustrations on pp. 2, 35, 266 and 269 from Chogay Trichen Rinpoche (1979), and on p. 53 from Karma Thinley (1980) also have no indication of their sources (cf. p. 277).

[23] Cf. J. C. Huntington (1985), p. 54, who critically replied to Aris, taking his statements to imply a rejection of other scholarly approaches to cultural history. He inter-

prets Aris's strong insistence on a sound historical and textual approach (probably meant here as a corrective to those who ignore and omit these aspects in their work) as a rejection of other approaches such as stylistic analysis.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 52, remarks with surprise the presence of a Sa-skya-pa painting at Glang-thang. In fact the monastery had had ties with the Sa-skya-pas since at least the early 1400s, and the famed Sa-skya-pa scholiast Shākya-mchog-ldan (1428–1507) had very close connections with it. Two of its abbots—masters from the sNel-pa noble family—became abbots of the nearby monastery of Na-lendra in the second half of the 15th century. See D. Jackson (1989a), pp. 11-15 and 16-18.

[25] Such a category, however, has almost the same faults as the Kadampa category he rejected. Even in the period before ca. 1000 there were a number of quite distinct religious traditions in Tibet, as described for example in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* of gNubs Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes. On these see, for instance, S. Karmay (1988).

[26] The painting which he proposed as an example of this "Nyingmapa" style is a depiction of a dark-complected (Green) Tārā, which he dated (caption to figure 1) to the early-to-mid 12th century. However, Huntington overlooked that the originator of this lineage in Tibet was the Bengali paṇḍita Atiśa (d. 1054). The Tibetan layman at the upper right is no doubt Atiśa's chief disciple 'Brom-ston. If the work was commissioned by a disciple of 'Brom-ston, then the proposed dating would fit almost perfectly. Here then is a true "Kadampa" painting, just as Pal had proposed, and in this case the designation is in no way artificial, arbitrary or misleading. The presence of a red hat in the 12th or 13th century does not indicate any definite sectarian affiliation.

[27] Huntington (1985), p. 50. The spelling should be *bris* or *ris* instead of *'bris*.

[28] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 42, n. 72: "Following Tāranātha, Koṅ-sprul notes that Tibetan art is initially derivative from the art of Nepal but that the Kashmiri influences were significant particularly in the western areas. One can distinguish three levels or strains in both the Nepalese Beri and the Kashmiri Khache. The three factors that are involved in the makeup of the Beri [*bal bris*] are: 1) the Nub-rnying, the [old Western] substratum; 2) the Śar-mthun, the Pāla style; 3) the synthesizing force that is the genius of the Nepalese people."
Kong-sprul himself, p. 570.2 (*oṃ* 208a), is discussing here Newar art in Nepal, and he does not use the term *shar mthun bris*, but rather *shar gyi bzo* ("eastern art") or *shar ris* ("eastern painting")—terms used also by Tāranātha. Smith may have incorporated the element *mthun* into the hypothetical term **shar mthun* because in both the basic verse and commentary of Kong-sprul, the middle period of Newar art is said to be in conformity (*mthun*) with the eastern Indian style. The basic verse is: *bal po sngon bar nub rnying shar dang mthun//*. The commentary: *bal po'i yul du'ang sngon gyi bzo rgyun nub rnying dang 'dra/ bar skabs kyi bris dang li ma ni shar dang mthun shas che ba'i bal yul rang lugs yin la phyis ni nges pa med/*. This is based on Tāranātha Kun-dga'-snying-po, *rGyal khams pa tā ra nā thas*, p. 262, where the terms are *shar gyi lha* and *shar ris* for Pāla (or "eastern Indian") cast images and paintings, respectively. At an intermediate period in Nepal, the paintings and figures were both said by Tāranātha to have been predominantly in accord with the east(ern style): *bar skabs kyi bris dang li ma ni shar dang mthun shas che....* See also Lama Chimpa and A. Chattopadhyaya transl. (1980), p. 348, where one finds the corresponding phrases: "eastern icons," "eastern paintings," and "... these resemble the eastern (Indian art)."

[29] Huntington is right to stress (p. 55) the need for a more complete knowledge of Tibetan Buddhism before making dogmatic statements. However, he then states regarding iconology: "An image of Kālacakra can only be of either the Kadampa tradition or that of their successors, the Gelukpa." In fact, the bKa'-gdams-pa proper never practiced this tradition intensively. The two most famous lineages of Kālacakra practice originated with the Bu-lugs (the tradition of Bu-ston) and the Jo-nang-pa (the lineage of Dol-po-pa), who inherited mainly the traditions of Rwa lo-tsā-ba and 'Bro lo-tsā-ba. 'Gos lo-tsā-ba gZhon-nu-dpal devoted an extensive chapter of his famed *Blue Annals* to this tantric cycle, and one can conveniently refer to G. Roerich's translation of chapter 10, pp. 753-838. In every case, one should strive to identify and obtain exact information about the lineage in question. The Tibetan records of teachings received (*thob yig* or *gsan yig*) are a gold mine in this respect, though none have yet been indexed or translated. Those who cannot read Tibetan should at least check the English translation of the *Blue Annals* to see whether the relevant lineage is described there.

[30] Huntington criticizes M. Aris (1985) for overemphasizing the value of "the Tibetan literary sources, which alone might be used to throw new light on the complex and diversified forms of Tibetan art...." And strictly speaking he was right, for the written sources are not the *only* basis for important research. Nevertheless, it is hard to see how significant new studies could be accomplished along the lines Huntington suggests without a solid grounding in the Tibetan language enabling the researcher directly to consult both written sources (including inscriptions) and knowledgeable living informants.

[31] Cf. Huntington (1985), p. 57. Such iconometrical differences are compared and discussed especially by the 19th-century authority mkhan-po Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas, as will be described below.

[32] See D. Jackson (1986) and (1990).

[33] G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), p. 12: Die Wurzeln, aus denen zwischen dem 8. und 14. Jahrhundert

n. Chr. das komplexe Phänomen der tibetischen Kunst gewachsen ist, sind relativ deutlich zu fassen, wenngleich hier die legendendurchsetzte einheimische Überlieferung von den historischen Fakten getrennt werden muß. So führen z. B. tibetische Texte eine angeblich von China angeregte Maltradition, die sog. Gadri-Schule (sGa-bris) [*sic*], auf Künstler zurück, die eine der beiden Gemahlinnen des Königs Songtsen Gampo, eine chinesische Prinzessin, in der Mitte des 7. Jahrhunderts aus China mitgebracht habe. Die südliche oder nepalische Maltradition Menri (sMan-bris) sei in der 2. Hälfte des 9. Jahrhunderts aus dem südlich an Tibet angrenzenden Nepal eingeführt worden; aus ihr habe sich dann im 17. Jahrhundert die 'neue' Menri-Schule (Mensar, sMan-gsar) entwickelt. Schließlich vereinige die um 1500 entstandene Karma-Gadri-Schule (karma-sgar-bris), die bis heute weiterexistiert, Stilelemente von drei Ländern in sich: indische Formen mit chinesischen Farben und Texturen sowie tibetischer Kompositionsweise. Auch viele der in literarischen Werken Tibets genannten Künstlerpersönlichkeiten müssen als legendär gelten.

[34] Gega Lama (1983), vol. 1, p. 44ff.

[35] Essen and Thingo (1989), p. 89: [Si-tu] "... ist bekannt als großer Meister der Karmagardri-Malschule (kar-ma-sgar-bris), die einen eigenen tibetischen Malstil entwickelt hat."

[36] These were investigated systematically by the authors with the hope of also possibly stimulating some further investigations in this field; see *ibid.*, vol. 2, Einführung, p. 9.

[37] In addition, three metal figures bear inscriptions naming the artists: (II 39) Lha-gdong-pa, (II 4) Lha-gdong dPon-chos, father and son, and (II 209) mChog-bzang, father and son.

[38] Here the inscription mentions: *sku thang 'di chos kyi snang pas lag bris su bgyis pa'o//*. In addition to the monastic ordination name Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas-phrin-las-kun-khyab-ye-shes-dpal-bzang-po, which Si-tu Paṇ-chen received from the 8th Zhwa-dmar, he also had been given the name "Karma-bstan-pa'i-nyin-byed-gtsug-lag-chos-kyi-snang-ba" by the same Lama at his *upāsaka* ordination. (See Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 456.5.) In his literary works, Si-tu Paṇ-chen commonly signs himself with parts of one or the other of these names.

[39] Item 6 in his bibliography is: *sKu rten byung tshul gyi bshad pa* by Kongtrul Yonten Gyatso, vol. *oṃ*, pp. 205-209, dPal-spungs edition.

[40] Gega Lama (1983), vol. 1, pp. 44ff.

[41] Its only reliance on oral tradition is the emphasis on *two* main styles, and the tracing of these back to the Nepalese and Chinese consorts of the 7th-century Tibetan ruler Srong-btsan-sgam-po, as outlined by R. Goepper in Essen and Thingo (1989).

[42] J. Huntington's own main informants, for instance, were not professional painters. It is interesting that the 5th Dalai Lama's record of teachings received (*thob yig*) documents quite distinct lineages for the study of art technique and for the study of the classification of old styles (as will also be described below). See Dalai bla-ma V, *Zab pa dang*, vol. 1, p. 39.2.

[43] J. Huntington (1990), p. 299: "Even the most well-educated and knowledgeable Tibetan informants, when asked to identify examples of the [sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris] schools, indiscriminately will point out virtually any Tibetan Bal bris painting or Sa skya Bal bris painting."

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 306, n. 25, specifies his primary informants as having been Ngawang Gelek [Demo] and Domo Geshe Rinpoche in 1969 and 1970, both of whom had been active at Tibet House during this period. Gelek Rinpoche (Ngawang Gelek Demo) told me in a personal conversation in New Delhi, 1982, that among traditional scholars, the ability to identify confidently the early Tibetan painting styles most probably had died out with the passing of Khri-byang Rin-po-che (1901–1981). The late Khri-byang Rin-po-che mentioned to Ngawang Gelek Rinpoche as typical features of the mKhyen-ris that the ends of wrathful deities' eyebrows curved up at the ends, and that artists of the school were fond of painting lotuses with a sort of mauve pink (*zing skya*). For Gelek Rinpoche's own account of styles, see Ngawang Gelek Demo (1979), pp. 2-3. Mr. W. D. Shakabpa, moreover, told me in March 1982 in a private conversation that another typical feature of the mKhyen-ris mentioned by Khri-byang Rin-po-che was the treatment of the edges of clouds (such as by a series of dark bumps, though this feature can occasionally be found nowadays in Central Tibetan styles). Khri-byang Rin-po-che had moreover mentioned his seeing a thangka in Calcutta with an inscription identifying it as by a mKhyen-ris artist. The murals of Gong-dkar should help confirm or disprove the above characterizations. Shakabpa in writing his history also consulted Khri-byang Rin-po-che.

[45] This was correctly used, for instance, by Goepper (1989), p. 13, referring to "Malerei (*bris*) und Plastik (*'bur*)."

[46] Even the teacher of both of them, rDo-pa bKra-shis-rgyal-po, may well have been from Lho-kha. The "rDo-pa" element of his name seems to indicate he was from rDo, a place just a few miles east of bSam-yas in Lho-kha, as Ye-shes-shes-rab (1990), p. 15, also suggests. It would make sense that Gong-dkar mKhyen-brtse at least would apprentice himself to someone from a nearby district. But as will be explained below, another source (a painting manual by sMan-bla-don-grub) mentions two painters from gNas-rnying near Gyantse as sMan-thang-pa's main teachers.

[47] On the term, see Gega Lama (1983), vol. 1, pp. 35 and 47. Huntington, p. 306, n. 55, further refers to

Richard Bartholomew (1967) for an "excellent definition of the Kar ma sGa[r] bris."

[48] See also Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 91.5, who mentions: ... *karma sogs kyi li ma.*

[49] For a more detailed review of this book, see D. Jackson (1993).

[50] She cites "L. Chandra," which should in fact be E. G. Smith (1970). To my knowledge, A-mdo was not a center of the Karma-sgar-bris, though H. Karmay (1975) and indirectly Smith (1970) also made this assertion. A-mdo had its own rather heavily Chinese-influenced styles, which are somewhat similar at first glance but which Tibetan artists can differentiate easily.

[51] As will be described in more detail below, however, the 5th Dalai Lama made a conscious effort to patronize both of the two main schools of his period—the sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris—and he even sponsored attempts to revive or at least imitate a style that by then was archaic, namely the Bye'u-ris. See Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de,* vol. 1, p. 283 (*ka* 142). In general, he sought to promote not one but several of the artistic, cultural and spiritual traditions that he considered himself heir to, though he did it selectively and with a connoisseur's eye, so to speak. The relatively uninspired cultural homogenization that set in from the 18th century onward in Central Tibet was neither his work nor intention.

[52] Following Huntington who had also termed it the "dGe-lugs-pa international style." She also, p. 65, n. 3, follows Huntington in adopting the Sarthun (*sic*) as a stylistic sub-type.

[53] Previously the only work of a similarly wide scope was Tucci (1973), *Transhimalaya.* The depth of Chayet's contribution, and the progress within the field in the last twenty years, can best be gauged in comparison with this book of Tucci's.

[54] See also the book P. Bishop (1989), *The Myth of Shangri-La: Tibet, Travel Writing and the Western Creation of Sacred Landscape.*

[55] See especially pp. 19f. and 177.

[56] I also found brief passages on Tibetan painting styles in the following work, though too late to describe them in detail: (1) G. Béguin ed. (1977) *Dieux et démons d'Himālaya: Art du Bouddhisme lamaique,* p. 60; (2) C. Copeland (1980), *Tankas from the Koelz Collection,* Michigan Papers on South and Southeast Asia, no. 18, pp. 17-19; (3) Ngawang Samten (1986), *Mañjuśrī: An Exhibition of Rare Thankas,* p. 12; and (4) R. A. Stein (1987), *La civilisation tibétaine,* p. 200. Studies I have not yet seen include J. C. French (1943), "Tibetan Art," *Indian Art and Letters,* no. 17, pp. 92-96; and N. G. Ronge (1982), "Kunst und Stil in Tibet," in C. C. Müller and W. Raunig, eds., *Der Weg zum Dach der Welt* (Innsbruck), pp. 323-353.

Chapter 2

Tibetan Sources

Even though considerable progress has thus been made in recent years in the study of Tibetan styles and stylistic influences, most scholars continue to work without a firm or detailed enough chronology of the great Tibetan painters and their traditions. In the last two decades in particular, several of the traditional stylistic designations have come into use among specialists, though usually without a precise chronological frame of reference. For example, the mKhyen-ris tradition was mentioned by a number of scholars, though nearly all mistakenly placed its founder, mKhyen-brtse chen-mo, in the 16th century—following an error that goes back to a provisional identification made by E. G. Smith (1970). (mKhyen-brtse chen-mo actually flourished about one century earlier, in the mid 15th century, and he is said to have been a contemporary of sMan-thang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub.) Such errors, however, can be rectified and a more secure chronological basis established by going directly to the relevant Tibetan historical sources, many of which are now readily accessible. In the following pages I would like to survey the most important of the available sources that give connected, deliberate accounts, however brief, of the great painters and their traditions. I will begin by describing pre-20th-century traditional works and then go on to the contributions of modern Tibetan authors.

Traditional Accounts

Treatments of both the painters and their styles are found in a variety of Tibetan works. Here it may be useful at the start to divide the sources according to which subject matter predominates, the artists or the art works.

Eight Earlier Accounts of the Great Painters

The chief available accounts of the great Tibetan painters by indigenous authors are short passages in the following eight works:

(1) sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho (1653–1705), *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya... g.ya' sel*

(2) De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs (fl. early 18th c.), *Kun gsal tshon*, chapter 30

(3) De'u-dmar dge-bshes, *Rab gnas kyi rgyas bshad*

(4) Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen (1697–1774), *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*

(5) Sum-pa mkhan-po Ye-shes-dpal-'byor (1704–1788), *dPag bsam ljon bzang*

(6) Klong-rdol bla-ma Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang (1719–1794/5), *bZo dang gso ba*, gSung 'bum, section *ma*

(7) Gu-ru bKra-shis (=sTag-sgang mkhas-mchog Ngag-dbang-blo-gros), *Chos 'byung ngo mtshar gtam*, bZo rig pa'i skabs

(8) Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas (1813–1899), *Shes bya kun khyab*

Each of these eight sources belongs to a quite different type of literary work, and it may therefore be of interest to give a brief description of each here. (For the texts and translations, see below, Appendices A through H.)



Fig. 4. sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho. Drawing by the contemporary Tibetan artist Mig-dmar in Dharamsala, India. Courtesy of Dr. C. Cüppers.

(1) sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho's *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya... g.ya' sel* was a work that the learned regent of Tibet completed in 1688. It consists of a series of replies on controversial points raised in his earlier treatise on calendar calculation, etc. (*rtsis*), the *Bai ḍū rya dkar po* (composed 1683-85), the last chapter of which treated aspects of religious art.[57] This was perhaps the source which Tucci and Roerich's informants referred to as the "Vai ser." What those informants may actually have meant was something like "Bai sel," possibly as an abbreviation for the *Bai ḍū rya g.ya' sel*.[58]

Another relevant source by the sDe-srid is his catalogue to the funeral reliquary and shrine of the 5th Dalai Lama in the Potala (completed in the 1690s). The sDe-srid briefly recounts here too a brief traditional sketch of the greatest three early painting masters, though asserting at the end that there was no tradition that was not included within either the sMan-ris or mKhyen-ris. He also gives extensive lists of contemporary artists and artisans.[59]

(2) De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs's first work listed above is entitled in full *Kun gsal tshon gyi las rim me tog mdangs ster 'ja' 'od 'bum byin*. It is a remarkable manual which addresses many aspects of the Tibetan painter's craft. Its thirtieth chapter (pp. 55a ff.) treats the history of Buddhist art and the differentiation between the three kinds of sacred "supports" (*rten*). The history of Tibetan sacred painting in particular—which in fact just sketches the lives of the most notable painters—is found on pp. 63b-64b. Though the work is written in verse, in this chapter it agrees in its contents with the sDe-srid's account, except for a few references to the earliest period. The last verse also mentions the existence of other artistic lineages. (A very different account

of traditional *styles* which it gives in its tenth chapter will be described and translated below.) Though mentioned in at least one recent Tibetan history, the work has yet to be published.[60] I have seen a photocopy of a bound ninety-folio *dbu-med* manuscript of this work in the library of Mr. Tashi Tsering.

The author of the manual, De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs, was born in Khams at gSer-dga' in northwest Go-'jo sometime in the late 1600s (1665?).[61] He was born into a Bi-ji lineage, famed for its great doctors. He was a scholar of wide learning and included medicine and pharmacognosy among his areas of expertise. One of his strengths was as a traditional "taxonomist" of herbs, animals and minerals—an excellent preparation for approaching the problem of stylistic classification in art, one would think.

His original religious links were with the Karma and 'Brug-pa bka'-brgyud traditions. As a youth he became a monk of rDzi-dgar monastery, located in 'Jo-mda' district about fifty-five kilometers due north of his home. His main teachers there were the teachers Karma-bstan-'phel and Kun-dga'-bstan-'dzin (Khams-sprul, 1680–1728).[62] Following some troubles there with his fellow monks, he went to Lha-thog, a place about sixty kilometers northeast of Chab-mdo town. After a while he had serious troubles there too, in this case chiefly instigated by the local ruler, Lha-thog rgyal-po Blo-gros, who in a fit of wrath expelled him from the area and went so far as to destroy some of his writings (burning some and hurling others into a river).[63] bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs just managed to escape with his life, fleeing first, it is said, to Yunnan in China and then making his way to India. From there he travelled to Central Tibet, studying for some time at Se-ra monastery, and also spent a long period living in the northern nomadic district of gNam-mtsho.[64]

His main (later?) seat was the small hermitage of De'u-dmar Zab-rgyas-chos-gling that he founded near his birthplace (it later became the small monastery called mKho-khyim dgon-pa). His most outstanding students for medicine are said to have included Si-tu Paṇ-chen (1700–1774), Khams-sprul bsTan-'dzin-chos-kyi-nyi-ma (b. 1730), and the famous artist rDza-stod [or rJe-stod/rGyes-stod?] Lha-chen-pa Dharma-manggalam (Chos-bkra-shis).[65]

He composed his art manual at De'u-dmar Zab-rgyas-chos-gling probably in the first half of the 1700s (in the 1730s?). De'u-dmar dge-bshes refers on f. 22b of this work to still another invaluable contribution of his, namely a manual of various crafts (*bzo yig*). This has been recently published with an assortment of other Tibetan treatises on arts and techniques in the volume *bZo rig nyer mkho gdams bsgrigs*.[66] He composed this latter work, entitled *Rig pa bzo yi gnas las tshogs phran tshegs 'dod rgur sgyur ba pra phab 'od kyi snang brnyan*, at Derge dgon-chen Lhun-grub-steng at the original request of sprul-sku Zal bla-ma Padma-dbang-rgyal and with later urging from mchog-sprul sGrub-brgyud-bstan-'dzin-dar-rgyas, the Bi-ji bla-ma bKra-shis of Thang-skya, and Ra-mdo lha-bzo Padma-dbang.[67]

(3) De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs's second main relevant work, his *Rab gnas kyi rgyas bshad*, is a treatise explaining in detail how sacred images should be ritually blessed or vivified after their creation, and one of its sections deals with artists and their history, in connection with the "bodily support" (*sku rten*) class of sacred objects. This work too is undated, though it was written in the same place as his art manual, *Kun gsal tshon*.

(4) Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen's *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung bkra shis sgo mang rten dang brten pa bcas pa'i ji ltar bskrun pa las brtsam pa'i gleg bam bdud rtsi'i rlabs phreng* is a work that this famous scholar (the chief editor of the Derge Tanjur) composed at sDe-dge Lhun-grub-steng in 1748 at the request of the noble monk Kun-dga'-phrin-las-rgya-mtsho'i-sde. Its main purpose was to describe the erection of a temple in Derge for housing the newly completed Kanjur and Tanjur printing blocks. The work deals with the history and principles of religious art as a digression when explaining how the sacred contents of the temple were produced.

Another valuable contribution by the Zhu-chen is found in the parallel passage of a work



Fig. 5. Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen. Drawn by sMad-shod A-'phel, xylographed in the Derge edition of the Tanjur (1744), vol. 316 (shrī), f. 500a. Published J. Kolmaś (1978), ref. no. 305b.

describing the building of the dGe-lugs-pa temple dGa'-ldan-rnam-rgyal-gling (at rNam-rgyal in lDan-ma?). He wrote a record of the construction of this temple entitled *dGa' ldan rnam rgyal gling du rten bzhengs pa las brtsams pa'i gleng ba dbyar gyi rnga gsang* in 1763 at the request of one Blo-bzang-shes-rab.[68] In this passage (p. 318) Zhu-chen largely follows his earlier account but then adds some further information on painting styles in lDan-ma, which will be presented below in connection with the careers of Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang and of Zhu-chen himself.[69]

(5) Sum-pa mkhan-po Ye-shes-dpal-'byor's *dPag bsam ljon bzang* (completed 1747?) is a history of Buddhism (*chos 'byung*) in India and Tibet, including accounts of the transmission of all important traditional fields of knowledge such as religious art (both Indian and Tibetan).[70]

(6) The work of Klong-rdol bla-ma Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang comprising section *ma* of his collected works (*gSung 'bum*) is a summary of the basic terms and concepts of the three traditional fields of knowledge (*rig gnas*) "arts and techniques" (*bzo*), medicine (*gso ba*) and calendar-calculation/divination (*skar rtsis*). It was written as a sort of memorandum (*brjed tho*) in the mid to late 1700s and edited by his disciple. The account of Tibetan painters occurs in a brief introduction explaining whose tradition of religious art he was for the most part following.[71]

(7) The history of Buddhism by Gu-ru bKra-shis (commonly known as simply the *Gur bkra'i chos 'byung*) possesses, like a number of similar histories, a short chapter devoted to the history of art and techniques (*bZo rig pa'i skabs*).[72] Gu-ru bKra-shis (alias sTag-sgang mkhas-mchog Ngag-dbang-blo-gros) wrote the work between the years 1807 and 1813, and in addition to the expected description of religious art he also mentions (p. 1005) such related topics as scripts, and he even alludes in passing to the traditional art of evaluating sacred images of various countries, musical instruments, tea, porcelain, silk, etc., as formulated in the *dpyad-don* treatises. His account contains several interesting general observations, such as his summary description of the development of Tibetan Buddhist art which stresses the predominant influence exercised by Chinese styles of painting at a later stage:[73]

It is said that here in the country of Tibet previously in the time of the early great religious kings [i.e. in the 7th-9th



Fig. 6. Klong-rdol bla-ma. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 495 (a 247a).



Fig. 7. Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas. Drawing by the Sherpa artist Oleshey (dge-chung Ngag-dbang-legs-bshad alias Sho-rong A'u Legs-bshad) in Kailash, vol. 3-4 (1975), p. 384.

centuries] there was much [religious art] produced by emanated artisans (*sprul pa'i bzo bo*). After that [in the post-10th-century period] there occurred in successive stages: in the prior period both painting and sculpture [followed the Newar style], and [then] in the subsequent period sculpture was predominately [like] Newar divine figures (*bal lha*), while pictorial art accorded predominately with Chinese painting....[74]

The Tibetan painters and styles he mentions in this passage (pp. 1003-4) are: (1) the Bal-bris; (2) rDo-pa bKras-rgyal; (3) sMan-bla-don-grub; (4) mKhyen-brtse chen-mo; (5) sprul-sku Bye'u; (6) Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis and the sGar-bris; (7) 'Phreng-kha-ba ("sprul-sku Nga-la-gzigs"); (8) gTsang-pa Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho and the sMan-gsar; and (9) Chos-kyi-nyin-byed, i.e. Si-tu Paṇ-chen. At the end of the passage he concludes by drawing what for the tradition is an important distinction:[75]

The above [great artists] are superior since they were painters who were graced by enlightened deities. But as for the many other different paintings one sees that have been produced by the skill of individual [ordinary] artisans, [these are simply too numerous and various] to be encompassed by critical investigation.[76]

(8) Finally, the *Shes bya kun khyab* of Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas (1813–1899), which he completed at dPal-spungs Thub-bstan-chos-'khor-gling in 1864, is a compendium of traditional knowledge.[77] Using an exposition of the three systems of Buddhist vows as its overall framework, the work briefly treats all established fields of learning, including art and techniques (*bzo rig*).[78] Kong-sprul's contribution here is partly based on the earlier tradition transmitted by the sDe-srid and his followers (including Gu-ru bKra-shis), partly on Klong-rdol bla-ma (such as concerning the painting style of Dwags-po

[Dwags-ris]), and partly it seems to reflect his own special knowledge of the Karma bka'-brgyud sect and its traditions of religious art.[79]

The relevant historical sections of most of the above works are closely connected: it seems likely that the accounts of De'u-dmar dge-bshes (*Kun gsal tshon* [Painting Manual, chapter 30], and *Rab gnas*), Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen (*gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*), Sum-pa mkhan-po and Gu-ru bKra-shis all derive their histories of the three early Tibetan master painters directly or indirectly from that of the sDe-srid. Only Klong-rdol bla-ma's very brief account—which is actually more an enumeration of names than a historical narrative—diverges significantly. The account of Kong-sprul, although otherwise fairly standard for the early styles, is unique for the special emphasis it gives to the Karma-sgar-bris and its great masters. The earliest of the above sources to mention the founder of the Karma-sgar-bris by name was, however, Gu-ru bKra-shis. The latter made his account still more inclusive by also mentioning more recent great painters such as 'Phreng-kha-ba, Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho and Si-tu Paṇ-chen.

Three Tibetan Sources Describing the Traditional Painting Styles

In addition to the above, there are known to exist at least three other traditional sources of great significance. But unlike the above eight, these three are not concerned mainly with the artists, but rather with the traditional styles and their identifying characteristics. Since the most important of these have never been translated before, I present their key passages here in translation.

(1) De'u-dmar dge-bshes's Description of Styles

The most significant, and probably the earliest, of these three is found in the above-mentioned painting manual by De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs (b. 1665?). The tenth chapter of this work gives not only a cursory sketch of the lives and careers of the great painters, but also actually attempts to describe several of the defining features of the main traditional painting *styles*. Though fairly brief, it is still the only treatment of its length so far known to exist in Tibetan literature.

De'u-dmar dge-bshes's manual contains a treasure-trove of information on the theoretical, practical and doctrinal background of Tibetan art. Chapter ten of this work presents an account of previous painting traditions (*sngon byung tshon srol gtam*), but in a unique way. First the author gives a traditional account of the earliest Buddha image in India carved from sandalwood (in the Buddha's time) and how that image came to China and was taken as the example for the earliest Chinese scroll painting by the minister Zi Chun Phu Sa Then. De'u-dmar dge-bshes thus seems to etymologize the word *si thang* (or *zi thang*), "[Chinese] silk scroll painting," back to the name of this legendary (?) minister.[80]

The author then attempts to describe the famous painting styles known to him. My translation of the chapter begins from verse 6, at the point in the narrative where the sandalwood Buddha image has miraculously gone from India to China. Here begins a description in more or less detail of eleven styles: (a) the Chinese "Zi-thang" tradition, (b) an early Tibetan tradition, (c) the Nepalese tradition, (d) the ancient tradition of Lha-chen sKyu-ra, (e) the sacred painting tradition of India, the Holy Land, (f) the art of the eastern region of India, (g) the tradition of the Karma-pa encampment, (h) the sacred painting of central Tibet (*bod*) (of about the 14th or 15th century?), (i) the tradition of sprul-sku Bye'u, (j) the tradition of the sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa, and (k) the tradition of the Kar-shod-pa people. It is interesting that sprul-sku Bye'u here stands in the sequence before sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa. One peculiarity of this account is that it lacks any mention of mKhyen-brtse's style.[81] Similarly, there is no description of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's work.

The manuscript text accessible to me is corrupt in many places. Fortunately another version of most of this passage, with generally better readings, has been published in the book of Ye-shes-shes-rab (1990), pp. 24-27.[82] Because of the difficulty of these verses—not only in vocabulary but

also in syntax—the following translation is nothing more than a tentative attempt. Probably it will be possible to clarify several doubtful points of vocabulary in the future through a careful reading of the other chapters of De'u-dmar's manual when the entire text becomes available. (For the full Tibetan text of chapter 10, see below, Appendix B, part 1).

The Story of Previous Painting Traditions

(a) The Chinese "Zi-thang" Style

.... The [miraculous sandalwood Buddha] image remained there, in the manner of something manifesting itself while lacking any substantial nature. The [Chinese] emperor, who had no sacred images, saw it. At that time his minister named Zi Chun Phu Sa Then, who was an emanation of Mañjuśrī, drew the [image] onto cloth, just as he had seen it. (X 6)

The tradition of the "[Chinese] scroll paintings" (*si thang*) of Zi Then, in which images were painted by applying a thousand basic pigments to that original drawn [by that Chinese minister], spread in China.[83] The painting lineage of that [tradition] has not declined. (X 7)

Later [this] lineage of art practice, in which one accordingly painted by applying one thousand colors through dyeing and pigment application to silk, cotton and paper, did not decline. It is this one that exists even now. (X 8)

At the entreaty of the Emperor, that Buddha image came inside the palace and [remained there], acting for the benefit of living beings. This is the image famed as the "Sandalwood Lord" (*tsan dan jo bo*), which now remains in China on the throne of Śākyamuni, as the representative [or regent of the Buddha]. (X 9)

This painting tradition of Chinese artistic practice just barely survives. Now here in Tibet the true tradition of painting scroll paintings in the tradition of Zi of China is rare. (X 10)

The tradition of painting deities by making many colors from one basic pigment is Tibetan, and it is not found in China. In the Chinese tradition, the basic pigments are many but few are repeated. (X 11)

[In this Chinese manner] sky and earth [receive] several [ways of] shading, and similarly crags and clouds [receive] merely shading. Animals, bodies, robes and jewelry, dwellings, trees and flowers are made completely manifest by the excellent skill in color [application, i.e. not by later shading and outlining]. (X 12)

The background realm is pale and clear. In particular the middle areas and the borders of mountains and plains are pale, and there are many trees, green plants, and crags, and much water. (X 13)

There are many birds, dragons, game animals and predatory beasts who move about in the sky, on the earth and in the water. The painting is wonderful, setting forth as possible the impossible. The background field is vast, while the space occupied by each deity is small. Deities and human figures dwell in [closely arranged] groups. (X 14)

In the background realm, there are many empty lands and places. The skeletal structure and musculature/flesh contour of divine figures as well as the various robes and scarves are elegant. Moods of peace, calm, relaxation and laughter are expressed.[84] (X 15)

Throne canopies, and curtains behind head and back are large. The paints are detailed, thin and clear, and many colors fade out until their edges are hidden and imperceptible. The outlining of [or with?] grass-color such as green[85] is slightly coarse and apparent. (X 16)

[The tradition of making] such "Zi-scroll paintings" as this, whose tradition of artistic practice had not declined, spread during the period of the [8th-century Tibetan] King Khri-srong-lde'u-btsan. But in an intervening period it died out. Nowadays it is [again] spreading a bit. Its paint application is merely this [much]. (X 17)

(b) An Early Tibetan Tradition

[The next tradition is] completely the reverse of the above. The basic pigments are few, and they are repeated much. The colors of the background sky and earth are more splendid than the deity's body. (X 18)

Moreover, the pigment layer is thick, with shading being infrequent. All shading is like "the arrangement of three shades arising [in sequence]" ([*g*]*sum mdangs shar bsgrigs*).[86] Outlining is rough, being even in thickness and obvious to the eye. The colors of sky and earth, mountain and plain, rock and stream, etc. come in direct contact. (X 19)

Except for the outlined edges, there is no difference in thinness in the middle or at the edge, or between upper and lower parts, in a field of color. The areas occupied by divine forms (*lha 'bras*) are large, while the background realm is narrow. And all [figures] are distributed and arranged [all] around the upper and lower parts of the painting. (X 20)

Trees, crags, mountains and clouds are smaller than the bodily forms. Curtains behind head and back as well as throne canopies are small. Clothing and intertwining scarves are of simple forms. For the most part [these] have much contour [or convolution? *'gyur che*], and the flesh and bone [structure of bodies] is stiff. (X 21)

The flesh at the lower edge of the eyelids is [red and bulging in a] very agitated [way] without relaxing, as if

[the figures] were shooing away birds and wild animals. [The painters] strive more for splendid (*rngam*) colors than for [good] forms. This is the least [or: earliest?] Tibetan [painting] tradition. (X 22)

(c) The Nepalese Tradition

Though there are compounded blue,[87] compounded green and "sulfur green" (*mu ljang*), there is no malachite green or azurite blue, and [the color] red predominates. Sky and earth are mixed [i.e. not clearly differentiated], and are similarly painted. And except for that, there is not much landscape, [and few] mountains, crags, trees or streams. Those that may occur are devoid of any expression [or charming form]. (X 23)

The skeletal structure is excellent, but the musculature/flesh contour (*sha 'gyur*) is inferior (*bshen = zhan?*). The upper part of the body is broad, while the lower part is contracted. The face is round. The eyes look to the side [or: are oval? *ldems*]. And finger tips bend [or have contour?]. (X 24)

The robes and intertwining scarves are of an inferior, inelegant style, and much of the body is left naked. Repeating designs and depictions of trees, crags, clouds and water are done in a single manner, and except for that they have no [variety of] expression. (X 25)

Only the bodies and robes or scarves are shaded. The colors are bright, and they shine with the light of a surface glair [?], possessing rich [intense] tones. [Such a painting belongs to] the Nepalese tradition. (X 26)

(d) The Early Painting Tradition of Lha-chen sKyu-ra

The early Tibetan tradition also is like this [last one]. [That is,] it is exactly like the [just-described] Nepalese tradition, except for the following points: The musculature/flesh contour is as in the Tibetan [tradition]. The atmosphere and expression of the landscape is a bit better.[88] The eyes are round. The fingertips do not bend [or have contoured shapes?]. This is the tradition of the Early-Translation [*snga 'gyur*, i.e. pre-11th-century] [great artist] Lha-chen sKyu-ra.[89] (X 27-28)

(e) The Sacred Painting Tradition of India, the Holy Land

The tone of colors are clear and pure (? *dwangs ma*, C: *mdangs ma*, shading washes), [but are] not so splendid or rich. Mountains and crags are small [or: few?], while there are many streams and trees, and many types of birds, game animals and cattle. The upper part of a deity's head is small, and the eyes are narrowly spaced. (X 29)

The beards[90] and eyebrows are thick, and the faces are thin [or: contoured, *nyag*]. The necks are narrow, flesh is thin, and limbs are long. The posture [of figures] is charming and asymmetrical. The vermilion pigment is inferior, while the minium is extremely excellent. (X 30)

There is no malachite green or azurite blue, but types of paints such as water-colors, wood- [or vegetable]-colors and flower-colors, and compounded colors predominate. This is the sacred painting tradition of India, the Holy Land. (X 31)

(f) Art of the Eastern Region of India

[Images in an Indian style] with a broad upper face and with very excellent bodily posture have come from the classes of technique and art[91] of the Eastern Region [of India]. (X 32)

(g) The Tradition of the Karma Encampment

The charm of the color is partly similar to a Chinese [painting], but [here the colors are] a bit more splendid than [in] that one. Everything receives dilute washes of excellent and soft shading. The face and eyes are lively. (X 33)

The bodies of lamas[92] are rounded, and [ceremonial] hats are small. The layout mostly conforms with Chinese [paintings]. This is the tradition of the Karma encampment. (X 34)

(h) The Sacred Painting of Central Tibet (of the late 14th or early 15th century?)

Color and layout are in general similar to the later [*sic*] Tibetan [painting tradition].[93] The bodily forms are relaxed and the spaces occupied by deities [and nimbuses] are open. The flesh [of figures] is thin. The limbs are slightly long. The eyes squint, and outlining strokes are exceedingly fine. (X 35)

Shading is soft, the edges (? *khud*) of the paint are very soft. Thrones, seats and back-rest curtains are large and tall. Ornaments, expressive forms and basic pigments are few. From among all colors, vermilion predominates. When viewed from afar, it shines splendidly with its predominating redness. This is called the sacred painting of central Tibet (*bod kyi lha bris*).[94] (X 36-37)

(i) The Tradition of sprul-sku Bye'u (or Byi'u)

The spaces occupied by divine forms [and nimbuses] are round, and the bodies are fat. Their limbs convey a slightly relaxed feeling. The colors, etc., are like the [Karma] Encampment tradition, except that robes and fluttering scarves are not shaded. This is the tradition of sprul-sku Byi'u. (X 38)

(j) The Tradition of the sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa

The coats of pigment and shading are thick. In most respects the layout is just like a Chinese scroll painting, with the exception that it is [here] slightly less orderly than [in] that one. [Also, the figures] are not placed in [close] groups, but are a bit more spread out. (X 39)

The bodily posture, skeletal structure and musculature/flesh contour are excellent. Necks are long, shoulders are withdrawn,[95] and clearness predominates. There is much shading. The colors are detailed, soft and richly splendid. Malachite and azurite [pigments] predominate. Because of the blue and green [colors], (X 40)

from a distance the painting is very splendid, and if one approaches [nearer], it is detailed. The forms of robes and scarves are not symmetrical. Even though the basic pigments are many, they are fewer than in China. There is greater richness in tone than in one hundred [other painted] images. The shading is evident through [the use of shading washes of] a somewhat greater strength. This is the tradition of the sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa. (X 41-42)

(k) The Tradition of the Kar-shod Artists

Nowadays there are some marvelous, outstanding [painting] traditions of predominantly good elements, which do not belong to a single tradition but combine various points from many famous ancient traditions.[96] This tradition lacks an [established traditional] name. (X 43)

The figures express a feeling of kindness and liveliness. The painting is soft and the tone is rich. The layout is marvelous, and the thickness of shading is a suitable amount. The postures and musculature of the figures are excellent, with variously tensed and relaxed forms. The basic pigments are not many. [The work] is very detailed. (X 44)

The figures are slightly large while the background realm is somewhat narrow. Other animals are rare, and the landscape is vast. All traditions of art (? *bzo mtha'*) are present. [The composition] is asymmetrical. Such is the contemporary excellent artistic practice of the people of dKar-shod, though I have found no [traditional] name for it.[97] (X 45)

(l) Conclusion

What knowledge could I have about most of the many [painting] traditions that differ from the above [genuine ones]—degenerate, mixed-up traditions that have no established tenets? Nevertheless, the traditions are many [and are] difficult to demarcate. Therefore, whatever errors are present in this [account of mine, which is like trying to] measure the sky in fathoms, I confess and renounce before the learned. (X 46)

(2) bDud-'dul-rdo-rje, 13th Karma-pa, *dPyad don tho chung*

The second of the three sources on painting styles is a very brief contribution by the 13th Karma-pa, bDud-'dul-rdo-rje (1733–1797).[98] This Karma-pa was the disciple of Si-tu Paṇ-chen, and he



Fig. 8. The 13th Karma-pa, bDud-'dul-rdo-rje. Detail from a modern redrawing of a Kar-shod-pa composition. After Karma Thinley (1980), p. 116.

evidently did some painting himself, including a self-portrait thangka which was preserved at Lha-stengs near 'Og-min Karma-dgon.[99] His description of styles is found in his brief versified *dpyad don* treatise (composed in the second half of the 18th century), a type of work that typically explains how to identify and evaluate various valuable things, including in this case sacred objects such as paintings. It accordingly explains—in verses which are all too cryptic and brief—how to identify works of art belonging to each major school of painting. The work was written for the trader (*tshong dpon*) bSam-grub-tshe-ring.[100]

The full treatise is not accessible to me, but most of the relevant passages were extracted by E. G. Smith (1970)—see below, Appendix E—thus making possible the following translation:

The first thangkas here in Tibet were in Newar style. They are excellent for maṇḍalas and tantric deities.

mKhyen-brtse founded the tradition of painting in an excellent Tibetan style. In particular [his] paintings of Tantric [deities'] forms were excellent in quality.

After him [there appeared] sMan-thang-[pa], father and son, [whose style was] known as the Old sMan [style]. Colors [in this style] were slightly thin, and [the painting] was superior in mood expressed [or in style] (*nyams gyur*)[101] to that [of mKhyen-brtse].

Gradually colors became thinner, and the mood expressed [or style] more distinguished. The paintings of Nam-[mkha']-bkra-[shis] had still thinner colors, and landscapes painted in a Chinese style. It became known as the "Encampment Style" (*sgar ris*).

The venerable Tenth [Karma-pa]'s paintings with the mood expressed [or style] of Kashmiri cast-metal statues are a great matchless wonder.

(3) The Account of Painting Styles found in the Manual *Ri mo mkhan*

The third versified account of the traditional styles is found in an anonymous work of a late (mid-19th-century or later?) Bhutanese scholar or painter, the treatise *Ri mo mkhan rnams la nye bar mkho ba'i lag len dang sbyin bdag gi mtshan nyid.*[102] This manual of painting practice was published in 1985 (by a Bhutanese, who had it printed in Delhi), making up pages 99-176 of a 350-page compendium of works on religious art entitled *Ri mo'i thig tshad dang tshon gyi lag len tshad ldan don du gnyer ba rnams la nye bar mkho ba mthong ba don ldan.*[103]

The manual treats the subject of stylistic classifications in just one brief section called "An Account of the Arising of Painting Lineages" (*bris rgyun byung ba'i lung bstan pa*). The description of styles here is longer than that of the 13th Karma-pa, but much briefer and less detailed than the one by De'u-dmar dge-bshes. In other sections, the manual treats at length such subjects as the mixing and application of paints, as well as the techniques of shading and outlining. The immediately preceding section explains the proper placement of artworks (within a building, etc.) and which elements are most important in different contexts. The subsequent section gives a recitation of how auspicious interconnections have come about [through the production of religious works of art] (*legs pa'i rten 'brel byung tshul bshad*). Originally this was probably a text for formal recitation at celebrations in connection with the making of religious art works or building projects.

After a brief traditional account of Indian Buddhist images, the author describes the painting traditions of Nepal and Tibet (pp. 142-145). This account reflects later southeastern-Tibetan and Bhutanese traditions, which apparently derived from a Central Tibetan New sMan-ris tradition whose followers greatly admired the achievements of the sMan-gsar-ba Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho. The manual as it stands cannot be earlier than about the year 1830, though it may have freely adapted an earlier Tibetan source in this passage.[104] Nevertheless the text is too brief (and too corrupt) to be of much help in identifying specific stylistic features. Like the account by De'u-dmar dge-bshes, it lacks an actual description of mKhyen-brtse's style, though here the latter tradition is at least prominently mentioned. (For the Tibetan text, see Appendix J.)

To explain the painting traditions that spread from that [ancient painting tradition established in Magadha district of Central India]:
Subsequently someone covered with cloth and [in that way] made a print [or rubbing] of that physical representative of the Buddha at age twenty-five made by [the god] Śakra. The painting lineage originating from that [rubbing] spread from Nepal to Tibet. It is explained that this was a slightly incorrect tradition. (5c-6d)

The Main Tibetan Traditions

The painting lineage of the present day has spread as two traditions—the sMan-tradition and the mKhyen-style. [These were] the artistic lineages of [the artists] mKhyen-brtse from the area of Gong-dkar-stod, and sMan-bla who was born in Lho-brag sMan-thang, the emanation of Mañjuśrī who [in a previous lifetime] when born in China painted the (silk?) scroll painting "Great Chinese [-style depiction of the Buddha's] Deeds" (*rgya mdzad chen mo*), and who [like mKhyen-brtse] was one of two students of rDo-pa bKra-shis-rgyal-po who were more skillful than that master. (7a-8d)

[There was also] the tradition of sprul-sku Byi'u from western gTsang [better: from Yar-stod?]. [Since these traditions] were slightly different, [there were] three [main] traditions. (9a-9c)

(a) Some Early Tibetan Traditions

In Tibet in a previous good period there was the tradition of painting the layout of the painting with empty space [around figures] drawn with correctly proportioned sketches. (9d-10b)

And [there was] one tradition, not at all mixed with [other] painting [styles?], [which was to] apply pigment to the painting surface like watercolor washes, and then leave the sketch clearly visible in all spots except for bodies and [for eyes, the latter being shaded] during "eye-opening." (10c-11b)

(b) The Tradition of sMan-thang [-pa]

The background earth was colored with a medium malachite green (*spang shun*)[105] and the sky with a medium azurite blue (*mthing shun*).[106] Gold outlining was widely employed [or was clear?]. This is known as the tradition of sMan-thang. (11c-d)

(c) The Tradition of sprul-sku Byi'u

Having just a few folds (or pleats) in garments is explained as the tradition of Byi'u. A detailed and manifold composition of beauty ornamented by various designs [and?] every form [?] (*gzugs 'gros*) is called the tradition of sprul-sku Byi'u. (12a-d)

(d) The New sMan-ris of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho

The divine bodies have many ornaments and are perfect in their beauty or ugliness. By the bodily forms, dances and strutting gestures, and the forms of such things as fluttering robes, clouds, fire and wind, the decorative forms (?), designs, flowers, waves, trees, birds, game animals, and gestures of human bodies, the charm of the landscape, rocky crags, slate [mountains] and glaciers, and by the form of waterfalls, jewels, etc., the [viewer's] mind is enchanted by the many emotional expressions (*nyams*) and feelings (*'gyur ba*).[107] (13a-14d)

This wonder, which thus arises as a beautifying ornament for [Tibet], the land of glaciers, and bestows [a refreshing] nectar to the eyes, was born from the representational artistry of the sMan-gsar [-ba] Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho, which is a festival delighting gods and men! (15a-d)

(e) Great Masters of Southeastern Tibet

The sprul-sku 'Phreng-kha-ba [dPal-ldan-blo-gros-bzang-po, ca. 1500-ca. 1570], Lho-brag sprul-sku Nor-bu-rgya-mtsho, sprul-sku Lab-smyon of Kong-po, [dbu-?] mDzad dKon-mchog of dPal-shod, mDzes-pa-skyid of E, Kong-po bla-ma sMin-gling-chos-bzang, and others made up a learned artistic lineage that was nectar [refreshing] the eye [of the beholder]. (16a-17b)

(f) Traditions of Bhutan

Here in the South, [Bhutan], the practice of 'Jam-dbyangs dPal-ldan-rgya-mtsho [gTsang-mkhan-chen, 1610–1684], [who was active] in the time of the first Zhabs-drung [Ngag-dbang-rnam-rgyal, 1594–1651]; gDung-mkhar slob-dpon 'Brug bSam-'grub and Kha-ling slob-dpon bsTan-'dzin, who were both disciples of sprul-sku 'Brug bsTan-'dzin; and then later A-'grod Nor-bu-don-'grub— (17c-18d)

These made up the artistic lineage of excellent paintings here in the South, [Bhutan]. The one called "the bodhisattva of Zhung-du-ri in Bhutan" [or: of 'Brug-gzhung Du-ri?] is counted as [having been] an expert in [artistic] expression in bygone times. (19a-c)

This text, too, in addition to possessing some unattested vocabulary (such as *gzugs 'gros*), is corrupt in places. Parts of it have previously been published from a Bhutanese manuscript in the *gTam tshogs* journal.[108]

A Final Source: The Iconometry Manual of Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas

One of the most promising and yet at times frustrating sources on the Tibetan styles of painting is the iconometry manual of mkhan-po Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas. I would like to discuss it separately here, as it does not fit into either of the above two groups of sources very well.

Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas, also known as mkhan-po "Karma-ratna," was a well-known figure from the Karma bka'-brgyud tradition in Khams province during the second half of the 19th century. He was a student of the gter-ston mChog-gyur gling-pa (mChog-gyur-bde-chen-zhig-po-gling-pa, 1829-70),[109] and was also a contemporary and student of Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas (1813–1899).[110] The identity of his teacher for painting is not known, though he refers to him in one passage (p. 246) as "Tra-ril." Quite a few of his writings have been published, including four manuscript volumes of his incomplete "Collected Works."[111] This treatise bears the title: "A Wish-fulfilling Jewel for Artists: The Proportions of All Sacred Figures, both Painted and Plastic" (*sKu'i bris 'bur yongs kyi thig tshad bzo bo'i yid bzhin nor bu*).[112] Like a number of his other writings, it was not included in his published Collected Works.

The colophon to the treatise informs the reader that the author, Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas, was a mkhan-po (*upadhyāya*) and adherent of the Vinaya, and that he wrote this particular treatise at a retreat of 'Og-min Karma monastery in

Khams. He composed it at the request of an artist (named "Tshe"? or artists?) who was from a place in Kar-shod Ma-yol, the birthplace of Khams-sprul Kun-dga'-bstan-'phel (2nd Khams-sprul, 1636–1678).[113] The work can be dated to about the mid 19th century.

In the course of describing the proportions of sacred figures, Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas mentions some of the relevant differences between the practices of the main traditions or of their leading masters, and it is mainly these passages that are important for stylistic studies. He wrote this treatise in verse for expert artists of the Kar-shod-pa tradition, and though the subject matter is at times difficult, the language throughout most of the work is deceptively easy. The author actually states in his colophon that he tried to write his work in an easily understandable style like that of the great adept Karma-chags-med. But in places he cannot resist referring to certain Tibetans by "reconstructed" Sanskrit names, such as "Karma-swasti" for Karma-bkra-shis (p. 222). Though meant to display learning, this practice can also give the opposite impression if not properly applied, for it can also make a name nearly impossible to recognize.

One salient theoretical feature of the work is the author's reducing at the beginning (p. 219) of all classes of proportions to just two: peaceful and wrathful.[114] But then he goes on to treat ten sections, of which six are proportional classes:

(1) How to add to and detract from proportions, pp. 219-223
(2) The general proportions of Buddhas, pp. 223-241
(3) How the proportions of the Bodhisattva is connected with the above, pp. 241-242
(4) The measures of a peaceful enlightened goddess, pp. 242-247
(5) The general proportions of wrathful deities, pp. 247-249
(6) The measures of dwarfed wrathful deities, pp. 249-251
(7) Different types of wrathfulness among wrathful deities, pp. 251-253
(8) The proportions of Śrāvakas, Pratyekas and humans, pp. 253-254
(9) Backrests, thrones, etc., pp. 254-258
(10) Faults to be avoided, p. 258
Conclusion: Dedication of merit and author's colophon, pp. 258-260.

The anonymous section that follows (pp. 261-280), a collection of descriptions of how to portray various subjects, belongs to another author. The main bKa'-brgyud-pa lineage portrayed is 'Brug-pa (p. 277). Could this section have been added later, in Bhutan?

The author asserts in principle the priority of artistic practice. He states for instance that if a figure of the Buddha is not beautiful to the eyes, it is a ridiculous thing even if the painter has correctly learned the proportions.[115] He later asserts: "Though the great scholars of Tibet say that one who paints having [correctly] laid down the proportional lines for all deities, pacific and wrathful, will be a king of artists, still the main thing is to establish [one's religious art] through practical instruction and the oral explanations [of one's teacher]."[116] There are numerous instances where he mentions how actual practice contradicts what the texts prescribe, for instance on pp. 220-221, where we are told that the proportions for Buddhas should be 125 small units, but that the actual practice nowadays is to paint them with just 120 units.

Here I would like to extract the painting traditions he refers to, the individuals he names, and the written sources he mentions. First, the styles:

The Old sMan-ris (*sman rnying*), pp. 220, 223, 229, 239 and 246. On p. 220 he mentions this as the basic system. He seems to take sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho as an adherent of this system (p. 223). Sometimes he refers to the universally known Old sMan-ris (*sman rnying yongs grags*), p. 239.

The New sMan-ris (*sman gsar*), pp. 228, 229 and 253. Sometimes, too, he refers to both sMan-ris traditions, old and new (*sman ris gnyis ka*).

A mixed tradition similar to the New sMan-ris, the tradition of Ri-mkhar-ba (*sman gsar 'dra rigs 'dre ma ri mkhar lugs*), p. 245.

The New sMan-ris mixed with the Dwags-po painting tradition (*sman gsar dwags bris 'dres pa*), p. 253.

The sGar-bris (*sgar bris*), p. 229. Sometimes he refers to the tradition universally held among Karma-sgar-bris painters (*sgar lugs yongs grags*), p. 221.

The New sGar-bris (*sgar lugs gsar ma*), pp. 229 and 246.

The Old sGar-bris (*sgar bris rnying*), p. 246.

Mixed sGar-bris and sMan-ris (*sgar sman 'dres pa*), p. 223.

The Newar style (*bal ris*), p. 246.

The mKhyen-ris (*mkhyen lugs*), p. 253.

Among the individual painters and authorities he mentions, one finds: p. 222, Karma-swasti (=Karma-bkra-shis); p. 222, sPang-mkhas-bstan-'dzin; p. 223, sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho; p. 223 "Vajrapratiṣṭha" ("rDo-rje-rab-gnas" [or: rDo-rje-rab-brtan? Or could it be an erroneous rendering of Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje?] "who mainly worked in the sMan-rnying"); p. 223, "Taremokṣa" ("sGrol-ma-thar?", "who worked in a mixed sGar-bris and sMan-ris style"); p. 237, gTsang-stod rTa-nag-pa [='Phreng-kha-ba]; p. 238, Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang; p. 245, Ri-mkhar-ba [='Phreng-kha-ba], whose tradition was "a mixed tradition similar to the New sMan-ris"; p. 246, my teacher "Tra-ril" [see also p. 221, "my teacher"]; p. 246, rTa-nag mkhas-pa [='Phreng-kha-ba]; p. 247, Phrin-las-rab-'phel[117]; p. 247, bDe-legs-rgya-mtsho; p. 247, dKon-mchog-phrin-las; p. 248, Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje; p. 251, slob-dpon Ratnarakṣita; p. 251, gSung-rab-rgya-mtsho[118]; p. 257, Rang-byung-zhabs [=Karma-pa Rang-byung-rdo-rje]; and p. 257, Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas [=Si-tu Paṇ-chen].

The written sources cited or mentioned by Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas include: p. 246, the *g.Ya' sel* [of sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho]; p. 246, rTa-nag mkhas-pa's [='Phreng-kha-ba's] *mDo rgyud gsal ba'i me long*; p. 249, the treatise (*yig cha*) of Mi-bskyod-zhabs [i.e. the 8th Karma-pa Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje]; and p. 251, the written exposition of proportions (*thig yig*) by gSung-rab-rgya-mtsho.

Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas's approach was above all pragmatic. For the painting of eyes, for instance, he recommended a certain twofold practice of both Old and New sMan-ris if the thangka was large, while if it was small the new sGar-bris method was preferable (pp. 228-229). He goes on to specify the respective strengths of three main traditions: For deities of a peaceful, beautifully smiling appearance, the sGar-bris was extremely good; for deities with wrathful faces, the New sMan-ris's depictions were very frightening; while for tantric deities with slightly wrathful, slightly smiling mien, the Old sMan-ris was most magnificent.[119] This passage gives concrete support to the assertion of De'u-dmar dge-bshes (X 43) that the Kar-shod-pa was a mixed tradition that selectively combined the good aspects of several earlier traditions.

When discussing the relative amount of bending (*'gying*) in the postures of certain deities, he mentions that he was told the following by his teacher "Tra-ril": [Figures painted in] Ri-mkhar-ba's [='Phreng-kha-ba's] tradition, which was a mixed tradition similar to the New sMan-ris, had creating wonderment as their main object, and they possessed greatly bent postures. Figures painted in the Old sMan-ris, which retained the original Newar style (in this regard), had little bending. The new and old traditions of the sGar-bris gave their figures just a suitable amount of bending.[120]

He also discusses the subtypes of wrathful deities, dividing them into the three traditional classes which, we are told, should be portrayed in distinctive manners. He also heard from his learned master the following about which class of treatment predominated in the respective traditions: In the sGar-bris and [Old] sMan-ris the wrathful deities are portrayed in the [moderately] wrathful manner of Yakṣas (*snod sbyin*) [e.g. Vaiśrāvaṇa]. The wrathful deities in the New sMan-ris mixed with the Dwags-ris tradition have the expressions and gestures of the [more wrathful] "demons" (*srin po*) [e.g. Vajrapāṇi]. In the mKhyen-ris and New sMan-ris traditions they have the [very] wrathful manner of Yama (*gshin rje*).[121]

The author also makes many important observations on iconometric practice, which is of course his main theme, and his work should be

carefully taken into account in future studies of that subject. A few sketches included in an untitled and as yet still unpublished manual of maṇḍala proportions by a 19th-century Karma bka'-brgyud master of Khams are also attributed in the inscriptions to mkhan-po Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas ("mkhan-po Ratna" = "lnga-rig-pa Ratna," pp. 57-58). Learned lamas of the tradition maintain that he was also the author or compiler of the latter collection.[122]

I have drawn upon the above traditional sources in the historical sketch that follows. Extracts from many of the above works have also been presented below in the appendices, in most cases with English translations. But the above survey of such sources cannot claim to be complete: it is said that there also existed in Tibet even more extensive accounts of art history and technique that have not yet become available, including even a so-called "*Ri mo'i chos 'byung*" ("History of Painting") and also the lost *bZo rig pa tra* of 'Ju' Mi-pham-rgya-mtsho (1846–1912), which enjoyed a legendary reputation among scholars.[123]

Works of Modern Tibetan Scholarship

CHOGAY TRICHEN RINPOCHE (1971) AND (1979)

Modern Tibetan contributions on the subject of sacred art include a small book on Tibetan monastic customs written by the Venerable Chogay Trichen Rinpoche (bCo-brgyad khri-chen Ngag-dbang-mkhyen-rab-legs-bshad-rgya-mtsho, b. 1919) that treated also religious art and temple building. This book (published in New Delhi, 1971) was written in the 1960s in reply to a request from H. H. the Dalai Lama, and it was accordingly given the playfully ambiguous abbreviated title *bsTan 'dzin mkho deb* ("Book needed by bsTan-'dzin" or "Book needed for adhering to the Doctrine").

The author based his section on iconometry and art history largely on the relevant treatise by Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen. A slightly revised Tibetan text was reproduced together with an English translation and illustrations in Chogay Trichen (1979), *Gateway to the Temple*, pp. 59-60.[124]

The contributions of the modern Tibetan scholars W. D. Shakabpa (1967), p. 11; Chogyam Trungpa (1975), p. 16; and L. S. Dagyab (1977), *Tibetan Religious Art*, part 1, pp. 37-39, have been described above with modern Western sources since they were all published in English.

W. D. SHAKABPA (1976)

W. D. Shakabpa (Zhwa-sgab-pa dBang-phyug-bde-ldan, 1908–1989) devoted a section of his two-volume political history of Tibet (*Bod kyi srid don rgyal rabs*, vol. 1, pp. 105-110) to the development of arts and crafts in Tibet, giving a rather extensive account of Tibetan sacred art and painters. Indeed, at the time it appeared, his contribution ranked as the single best treatment of the subjects. (For the Tibetan text, see below, Appendix K.) Though his work now requires correction or supplementing on some points, it added significantly to the historical accounts of the earlier Tibetan scholars. It complemented the contribution of E. G. Smith (1970) by independently uncovering additional details and references that enable a more accurate dating of several of the most important painters, especially sprul-sku Bye'u. The weakest part of his account was its description of the origin of the Karma-sgar-bris tradition, which Shakabpa (p. 111), following mkhan-po Khra-'gu Rin-po-che (b. 1933), attributed tentatively to the 10th Karma-pa, Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje. Here it is clear that Shakabpa and his informants did not yet have access to Kong-sprul's encyclopedia when (probably in the early 1970s) they put together their account.

'JAM-DBYANGS-BLO-GSAL (1982)

The now-deceased Amdo Jamyang (A-mdo 'Jam-dbyangs-blo-gsal, b. ca. 1915) was a well-known painter from rGyal-rong who came out of Tibet in about 1959 and for many years worked as painting teacher at the Tibetan Homes Foundation in Happy Valley, Mussoorie. In 1982 he published his own book *Bod kyi ri mo 'bri tshul deb gsar kun phan nyi ma* ("New-Sun Self-Learning Book on the Art of the Tibetan Painting"). On p. 14 he repeats the traditional account of sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, but goes on to sketch the ori-

gins of Buddhist art in A-mdo, beginning by repeating an old saying that it was excellent to paint figures in Tibetan style, and landscapes in Chinese style.[125] He also sketches the origins of his own lineage in rGyal-rong.

GEGA LAMA (1983)

The contribution of Gega Lama—a master painter of the Karma-sgar-bris school—is a newly written but in most ways still traditional Tibetan manual. It was translated into English by Karma Chöchi Nyima (Richard Barron), and both texts were published with numerous illustrations in two volumes under the title: *Principles of Tibetan Art: Illustrations and Explanations of Buddhist Iconography and Iconometry According to the Karma Gardri School.* The author, Gega Lama (dGe-dga' bla-ma), is from Khams Gling-tshang. He was born in 1931 at Rin-chen-gling in Gling-dkar-stod of Khams, and his main teacher was the artist Thang-bla-tshe-dbang, whose art was praised as authoritative by the dPal-spungs Si-tu rin-po-che Padma-dbang-mchog-rgyal-po (1886–1952). After coming to India, Gega Lama also studied under the artisan Dam-chos of Derge.

His account of the origins of Buddhist art, pictorial and plastic (*bris 'bur*), begins on p. 29, and after a traditional account of Indian styles, he begins his description of indigenous Tibetan painting on p. 32. He gives a somewhat idiosyncratic account, mentioning only two main styles—sGar-bris and sMan-bris—and linking them to separate foreign origins, namely to the Chinese and Nepalese styles, respectively. He describes, for instance, the activities of the 7th-century Chinese princess Kong-jo in spreading Buddhist art and establishing a Chinese style of painting (*rgya bris*) in Tibet, citing this as the ultimate origin of the Karma-sgar-bris.

For his account of later styles and artists, his main source was probably Kong-sprul, though here and there he adds additional comments or interesting information. He asserts (pp. 35 and 47) that the (New) sMan-ris style of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho was later called the gTsang-bris because the latter's birthplace was gTsang, and that this style flourished widely in western parts of Tibet (*bod stod phyogs*). Concerning his own sGar-bris style, he specifies three of the several models that played a formative role in the style's creation. According to him, the Zhwa-dmar and rGyal-tshab sprul-sku had instructed Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis to take the following for stylistic models:

1. A Chinese embroidery [or painting? (*si thang*)] offered to the 5th Karma-pa [De-bzhin-gshegs-pa (1384–1415)] by the Chinese emperor [Yongle] in 1407.
2. A realistic depiction of the 3rd Karma-pa [Rang-byung-rdo-rje (1284–1339)] when he appeared in the moon (*karma zla shar ma*) during an audience with the Chinese emperor.
3. The old Chinese-style depiction of the Sixteen Elders at Yer-pa known as the "Yer-pa rwa-ba-ma."

It would be interesting to know what written sources this ultimately derives from.[126] The author further mentions the names of otherwise forgotten sGar-bris artists, such as Karma-rin-chen and Dwags-po rab-'byams-pa mkhas-grub bsTan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan, and gives a few details about them. He also furnishes a brief biographical sketch of his teacher, Thang-bla-tshe-dbang, who learned drawing from Wag-ri bla-ma Blo-gros and coloring from Padma-rab-brtan of the Kar-shod tradition. The main written source he followed, according to his introduction (p. 5), was the otherwise unknown manual entitled *Blo gsal dgyes pa'i rol mo*, which must date to the late 1600s or later (he states that it was based on various sources including the writings of sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho).

Incidentally, a brief polemical exchange took place between Amdo Jamyang and Gega Lama in the mid 1980s. A controversial discussion is found near the end of Gega Lama's book (pp. 480ff), and Amdo Jamyang's reply to Gega Lama evidently appears in the second (smaller format) edition of his book as a final addendum.

RIG-'DZIN-RDO-RJE *ET AL.* (1985)

Some brief mentions of the traditional styles can be found in the recent Tibetan-language publications emanating from China and Tibet, for exam-

ple in the preface to the book *Bod kyi thang ka* ["Thangkas of Tibet"] by Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje *et al.* (1985), p. 9 (English transl. p. 197). This work shows an awareness of two of the traditional stylistic categories, the sMan-bris and mKhyen-bris, but otherwise contributes nothing further on them.[127] The authors do, however, try to describe (p. 9) a common fourfold regional classification of styles: (1) thangkas of dBus province, (2) gTsang style (*gtsang bris*), (3) Khams style (*khams bris*), and (4) Chinese style (*rgya bris*). It is interesting that the two plates identified as Chinese style by the authors (plates 28 and 29), though they do reflect a high degree of Chinese influence, are in fact not Chinese works but originated from the sGar-bris style fostered and patronized by the Si-tu Paṇ-chen. Finally the authors mention (p. 10) thangkas painted or similar activities by several great lamas: Sa-skya Paṇḍita, Tsong-kha-pa, mKhas-grub-rje and the 5th Dalai Lama. They also list the names of one important 17th-century painter from dBus province (Lho-brag bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu) and three from gTsang: Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho, Rong-pa bSod-nams-rgyal-po and 'Jam-dbyangs-nor-bu.

THUB-BSTAN-PHUN-TSHOGS (1985)

An article by Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs on "The History of Pictorial Fine Arts of Tibet," in the journal *Gangs dkar ri bo*, marks the beginning of a renewal in art-historical studies among Tibetans in modern Khams. The author, a Karma bka'-brgyud-pa monk who evidently hails from near Derge and has closest artistic links with the Karma-sgar-bris, began his article with two invocational verses in honor of sMan-thang-pa, mKhyen-brtse, and Si-tu Paṇ-chen (Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas). Then he laments the fact that after all the destruction that traditional Tibetan culture has undergone, it is hardly possible to find someone who can properly paint, to say nothing of explain the origins of art and the principles of sacred proportions. In addition to repeating the traditional account derived from the sDe-srid and Kong-sprul, he evidently also took the trouble to find further references. He adds for instance (p. 83) a few more details about the activities of sMan-thang-pa at bKra-shis-lhun-po in 1447 [sic], and quotes some details from a "History of bKra-shis-lhun-po."[128]

He asserts (p. 84) that it is nowadays a common usage to term the main tradition the "sMan-lugs," which includes both the New and Old sMan-bris. Regarding the sMan-gsar style of gTsang-pa Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho, he says that the figures in this style are comparatively thinner and longer, like the block-prints of the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava formerly printed at Kaḥ-thog monastery (near Derge). He was told that the painters Gru-pa Phur-bu (Phur-pu-tshe-ring of Chab-mdo) and 'Dzing-lha 'Jam-dbyangs of Kaḥ-thog painted in this style. The Thang-rgyal temple in the Derge dgon-chen (founded in 1446 by Thang-stong-rgyal-po) is supposed to have contained murals in the sMan-thang-pa tradition. Of particular interest is his account of the sGar-bris (pp. 84ff.), and of recent painting masters of his tradition in the Derge area—especially those connected with dPal-spungs—who will be mentioned in more detail below.

RIG-'DZIN-DPAL-'BYOR (1987)

The Lhasa *dbu-chung* Rig-'dzin-dpal-'byor (1933–1991) visited India in the mid 1980s and there wrote what may be the most recent Tibetan painting and iconometry manual. As the author explains (*Zhi khro rab 'byams* [1987], pp. 38f.), his book is based mainly on the otherwise unidentified iconometrical treatise *Sangs rgyas byang sems zhi drag gi lha sku'i cha tshad gsal ba'i me long*, though with reference to the manuals of sMan-bla-don-grub and 'Phreng-kha-ba. Apparently the author published a first edition himself in 1986. The version accessible to me appeared one year later, and it includes a brief publisher's note by Tashi Tsering. Written in easy verse, the work includes (p. 8) a simple summary of the preparatory visualizations to be practiced by Buddhist painters before beginning their work.

A final small section of the book (pp. 40-43) is devoted to relating the origins of Buddhist painting and the styles of Tibet (based on the sDe-srid and others), including a brief mention of the

author's own lineage. His account of the great masters' styles was apparently taken verbatim from the anonymous Bhutanese work on color preparation and the desirable characteristics of a patron, *Ri mo'i mkhan rnams la.*[129]

Rig-'dzin-dpal-'byor in his book, p. 42, dates the origin of the Lhasa "painters' guild" (*lha bris pa'i skyid sdug*) to the time of such masters as Lho-brag bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu and bsTan-'dzin-dar-rgyas, who were summoned in the 17th century by the 5th Dalai Lama to work on the "renovation" of the Potala Palace. (In his later work *'Bur sku'i phyag tshad* [1991], introduction, this is said to have taken place in 1645.) His own ancestor was the *dbu-chen* La-mo Kun-dga' who likewise is said to have taken part in that project. The family lineage has since then for some seven successive generations supplied artists for official works, and his own father was the sKyed-byed lha-bris las-tshan bSod-nams-rin-chen, who had the official rank of *dbu chen*.

bsTAN-PA-RAB-BRTAN (1988?)

An article addressing the special features of Tibetan painting appeared in the first issue of the Tibetan art research journal *Bod ljongs sgyu rtsal zhib 'jug*. Written by a certain bsTan-pa-rab-brtan, it gives a useful survey of the various components of Tibetan sacred painting, and goes on (pp. 61-64) to reject the excessive penetration of foreign (especially Western, realistic) influences. The author gives a brief sketch (pp. 59-60) of the traditional painting styles. He was influenced by Shakabpa (1976), but he also goes his own way in some details. For example, he identifies (p. 59) rDo-pa bKra-shis-rgyal-po as having come from western gTsang (*gtsang stod*). (This would have been expected, since the traditional accounts mention that sMan-bla-don-grub struck out for destinations in gTsang such as Sa-skya before meeting this master and studying under him.) bsTan-pa-rab-brtan states rather surprisingly that the colors blue and green slightly predominated in Byi'u-sgang-pa's style (as opposed to the expected colors red or orange and blue). Perhaps he knew the writings of either De'u-dmar dge-bshes or mkhan-po Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas. His descriptions of the three main later styles—sMan-ris, mKhyen-ris and Karma-sgar-bris—seem to be his own:

> [The Tradition of sMan-thang.] He founded his own tradition by accepting the good parts and rejecting the bad from the tradition of artistic practice of Byi'u-sgang-pa, in which the Nepalese style had predominated in the skeletal structure of figures. And in particular he initiated the practice of depicting a landscape [in the background]. The treatment of the landscape and ornamental designs is neither too rough nor too detailed, and it is beautiful. The colors are, for the most part, a bit pale and muted, and gold outlining details are finely done. [Paintings with these features] are known as the tradition of sMan-thang.[130]
>
> [The Tradition of the mKhyen-bris.] The skeletal structure and postures are slightly dissimilar from the foregoing. In particular, the strutting and revelling postures of fierce deities are very fierce, with a blissful mood manifesting. When fierce deities and maṇḍalas are painted, the work possesses special particular features. The colors are a bit bright, and [the painting] is filled with ornamental designs. The landscape is detailed. Outlining and shading are conspicuous. [Paintings possessing these features] are known as the tradition of the mKhyen-bris.[131]
>
> [The Karma-sgar-bris.] Moreover, there was born in Yar-stod a person called sprul-sku Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis. He learned the sMan-ris tradition from sKal-ldan-shar-phyogs-pa dKon-mchog-phan-bde from E. For the skeletal structure of figures he based himself on Indian cast-metal figures and the sMan-thang tradition, and he adopted special features of landscape and of coloring from the *si thang* thangkas, which were [Chinese] imperial paintings of the Ming dynastic period (*ming rgyal rabs skabs kyi rgyal srol ri mo'i si thang zhes pa*). The main coat of pigment (? *'bru tshon*) on the painting ground is thin, like watercolor washes (*hang tshon*), and the things portrayed project out slightly from the earth and sky. The eyes of deities are thin and small. The color red predominates slightly, and [the paintings] are detailed and mild-looking. [This style of painting] is known as the sGar-bris.
>
> These artistic traditions have continued intact down to the present time and our own generation and are still existing.[132]

SENG-GSHONG RDO-RJE-GCOD-PA (1988)

This article discusses the recent (i.e. post-1950s) history of the tradition of art developed in Seng-ge-gshong in Reb-gong district of A-mdo. Though the inhabitants of Seng-ge-gshong number no more than two thousand, they are widely known for their numerous excellent artists.

The author lists (pp. 85 and 90) many of the recent great painters from Seng-gshong, not neglecting to mention (p. 86) the great sufferings and humiliations undergone by them in the late 1960s and early 1970s during the "Great Cultural Revolution."

One of the main points the author stresses is the special identity of Seng-ge-gshong's art, and he resists the trend to term it "Reb-gong art"—though this, he tells us, has recently become officially accepted usage. His reason is that Reb-gong is a much greater district and wider designation. He resents even more strongly (p. 90) the attempts made by certain people to classify the inhabitants of Seng-ge-gshong as (Han) Chinese, so that its art too becomes classified as Chinese art. Likewise he rejects as completely unfounded (p. 93) the statements made by some that the initial spread of art in Reb-gong was contemporaneous with the spread of the dGe-lugs-pa school there in the 15th century, and he reminds the reader that Tibetan inhabitants and Buddhist culture entered the area long before then.

At one point (p. 94) he gives an interesting overview of painting, including its general subtypes and classifications. He refers in passing to two important iconographic sources, the so-called *lNga brgya pa* and *Sum brgya pa* (manuals containing five hundred and three hundred illustrations of deities, respectively).[133] He also presents (p. 98) a brief description of the typical ways of portraying expression through different treatments of eyes in their school, but mentions (pp. 99-100) that the details of an artist's technique are secret instructions and that anyone caught teaching them to an outsider would, by law, be expelled from the community.

GRANG HRU'U-THA'I (1988)

There also exists a strange but occasionally interesting article that describes the career of the important late-17th-century painter Lho-brag bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu. Originally written in Chinese by the writer "Grang Hru'u-tha'i," the article was subsequently translated into Tibetan by Tshe-ring-dbang-'dus and it appeared in the journal of the Tibetan Institute for Fine Arts Research.

Grang's article gives a brief sketch of the famous artist's life, portraying him as a man struggling against religion (literally "blind faith," *rmong dad*) and for a more objective and scientific knowledge of life upon which he could base a new, realistic approach to art. The author bases his main case for this on the fact that bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu painted details of the human anatomy, including internal organs, from direct observation of dissected cadavers.

The author does not, however, follow accepted scholarly practices in documenting the sources he used for reaching these conclusions. In one of the concluding paragraphs (p. 109) the author gives a Marxist set-piece analysis of art and artists in a feudal, theocratic society, attempting to show how bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu's own allegedly modern aspirations were frustrated by his unfavorable historical circumstances.

NGAG-DBANG-'JIGS-MED (1990)

This article, which ostensibly discusses at length the topic of the "mutual association or relations" (*phan tshun 'brel thud*) between Tibetan and Chinese painting in connection with modern art education practice, is written in a stilted "modern" (i.e. Communist) style replete with the obligatory socialist jargon, slogans and quotes. The author overly stresses—as might be expected in the circumstances—the connections with China, and describes the two national artistic traditions as like "two branches of the same vine," though each possessing some typical features of its own. The author further mentions the development of Buddhism in Tibet and the subsequent influence that religion exerted on art, but chooses to ignore completely the origin of those traditions in India. Instead, he highlights a number of similar Buddhist developments in China.

The author makes some interesting remarks on points of technique, mentioning, for example, the technique of coloring with faint watercolor washes (*ham tshon*), and listing a fivefold classification of outlining (*bcad*) (pp. 71-72). He blithely describes (p. 72) the Chinese and Tibetan use of brush and ink as if the two brushes were identical! The transparent political program of the author

throws into immediate doubt any passing comments he makes on art history or stylistic influences.

YE-SHES-SHES-RAB (1990)

One of the first *illustrated* manuals of Tibetan sacred art to be published in Tibet or China since the end of the Cultural Revolution is the book entitled *A Drop of Minium: [An Account of] the Origin of Art, together with Examples of Proportions* by Ye-shes-shes-rab. The work was published from Chengdu in 1990 in a printing of one thousand copies. One of the interesting things attempted by the artist-author was to identify the localities from which the famous artists came. For instance, the reputed teacher of sMan-thang-pa and mKhyen-brtse-ba, namely rDo-pa bKra-shis-rgyal-po, is said (p. 15) to have come from Lho-kha rDo (located a few kilometers east of bSam-yas), and sprul-sku Bye'u (or Byi'u) from Yar-stod in Lho-kha Yar-lung (p. 18). De'u-dmar dge-bshes is identified with Derge De'u-dmar in Khams, while 'Phreng-kha-ba is said to have come from rTe-nag (probably a misspelling of rTa-nag in gTsang).[134] Nevertheless, his account of art history has been taken mainly from Shakabpa (1976), as one can easily see from the information he gives about Byi'u-sgang-pa (p. 17). Some details of his account, however, contradict most other sources, such as his statement (p. 19) that the New sMan-ris (*sman gsar*) began with 'Phreng-kha-ba. He describes (p. 24) with feelings of inadequacy the great difficulties faced by a person who wants to study styles in detail:

> In general, even though we lack the names of the previous styles for Tibetan thangkas and murals, there exists the tradition of identifying paintings as one of three styles: "The Style of dBus Province" (*dbus bris*), "The Style of gTsang Province" (*gtsang bris*) and "The Style of Khams Province" (*khams bris*). But that seems to be merely a way of talking, and it seems difficult actually to specify their special features.
>
> If I were to go into details, I would have to explain the differences between the styles of India, China, Nepal and Tibet; and within Tibetan painting styles, between the styles of the three great traditions, and the style of the Karma encampment; and between the various styles of the masters in each district and place, and their various ways of executing divine forms and paint application. But I lack the ability to explain those, so...

At this point he makes his most significant "new" contribution by quoting at length (pp. 24-28) the treatment of traditional painting styles found in section ten of the rare manual of De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs.

BKA'-CHEN BLO-BZANG-PHUN-TSHOGS (1993)

A still more recent publication is the valuable book by the Tashilhunpo monk and master-artist ("bka'-chen"[135]) Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs. The latter began the study of painting at about age eleven under the master of the Tashilunpo painting workshop (*lha bris khang*) dbu-che bZhad-pa-chos-dar (d. mid/late 1960s, in the Cultural Revolution) and later continued his training under the dge-rgan chen-mo dbu-che Shi-log (ca. 1919–1992). He became one of the court artists to the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che, participating in the capacity of *dbu chung* (junior overseer) in the painting of the bDe-chen skal-bzang palace of the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che at Shigatse in 1958 and of the latter's residence-palace rDo-rje pho-brang in Lhasa in 1962. During the recent building of the bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal reliquary stūpa at Tashilhunpo after that lama's death there in early 1989, he had the responsibility of *dbu chen* (chief overseer) for painting. It was indeed the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che who first requested him to write this book.

The book explains and illustrates the proportions of divine figures as they are portrayed in the sMan-bris tradition of gTsang and Tashilhunpo, one of four main regional styles often mentioned (the other three being the dBus-bris, Khams-bris and rGya-bris, see p. 4). The author's foreword (pp. 3-10) includes a brief introduction to Buddhist art and a sketch of the history of his own gTsang-bris painting tradition, which for him begins with the foundation of Tashilhunpo and the painting of its murals. (Many details from this history will be given below in the main history.)

The book reproduces the texts of several important written sources (pp. 11-46), as well as many drawings of proportions (pp. 47-109). The written sources presented here include two major classics and three minor related works:

(1) sMan-thang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub, *bDe bar gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rab tu byed pa yid bzhin nor bu*, (pp. 11-32).

(2) 'Phreng-kha-ba dPal-ldan-blo-gros-bzang-po, exposition of the Eight Stūpas (pp. 32-35).

(3) A xylograph colophon to the above by the 5th Dalai Lama (pp. 35-37).

(4) A mural inscription composed by 'Phreng-kha-ba (p. 37). (See also below, Appendix I.)

(5) 'Phreng-kha-ba dPal-ldan-blo-gros-bzang-po, *bZo rig pa'i bstan bcos mdo rgyud gsal ba'i me long* (pp. 38-46).

The author's history of the gTsang painting tradition (gTsang-bris) mentions numerous survivals of original murals at Tashilhunpo, which from among the four largest dGe-lugs-pa monasteries was most successful in preserving its religious contents during the Cultural Revolution. (The monastery was spared from more extensive damage probably because of its status as the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che's monastic seat.) This book gives the reader reason to hope that quite a few old murals—including several by two of Tibet's greatest artists, sMan-bla-don-grub and Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho—still survive in the temples of Tashilhunpo and will be possible to document further in the future.

Notes

[57] On the *Bai ḍū rya dkar po*, see also D. Schuh (1973), p. 276. For a detailed description of the *bzo rig* section in the *g.Ya' sel*, see *ibid.*, pp. 278-9.

[58] See Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 293, no. 1. Tucci did however describe the *Bai ḍū rya g.ya' sel* in the same work on p. 136f., and he even mentioned that it contained a treatise on iconometry! He also referred, p. 136, to the similar treatise of the 5th Dalai Lama entitled *rTsis dkar nag las brtsams pa'i dris lan nyin byed dbang po'i snang ba*, which is vol. *wa* of his collected works, stating that it contains a section dealing with images and iconometry. Later (p. 293) Tucci cited a reference to the "Lord of Brush-wielders" (*pir thogs dbang po*) sMan-bla-don-grub, "father and son," which occurs on "p. 9" (=ff. 6b-7a?) of that work. The brief discussion contained in the latter source differs considerably from the iconometrical theories of sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho and his later followers. Prints of this work from the Zhol blocks survive in several collections including Patna, Gangtok and Tohoku, and I am obliged to Mr. Samten Karmay for making a xerox copy available to me. Recently a reprint from Gangtok has also become available.

[59] sDe-srid, *mChod sdong*, vol. 1, pp. 387.6-388.1 (1990 ed., p. 267): *thog ma'i lag rgyun bal po nas mched pa kho na phal che zhing/ phyis rdo pa bkras rgyal ba'i slob ma lho brag sman thang pa bzo rig pa'i tshul la gzhan dring mi 'jog pa'i mkhas par gyur te srol btod pa sman lugs/ gong dkar sgang stod pa mkhyen brtse chen mo zhes rnam dpyod sor mo'i 'phrul gyis snang srid kun gzugs brnyan du byed pa de las mched pa mkhyen lugs/ yar stod bye'u'i ri mo la sogs pa rang rang gi bsam pa'i khyer sos lugs tha dad pa mang du snang yang ngo bo sman mkhyen gnyis su ma 'dus pa med cing/.* These remarks are found in his extensive section devoted to mentioning how the reliquary shrine was superior by virtue of the artisans and artists who had built it, by how they had been gratified (by the patrons), and so forth (p. 265ff.): *...gang bzheng ba'i bzo bo dang de dag mnyes pa la sogs pas 'phags pa ni/.* He mentions also minor artisans by name, including even (p. 281) those who ground the pigments, prepared thread or sewed curtains.

[60] Shakabpa, *Bod kyi srid don rgyal rabs*, vol. 1, p. 109.

[61] There is some controversy about the dates of De'u-dmar dge-bshes. Byams-pa-phrin-las in his biographical sketch, p. 367, stated that De'u-dmar dge-bshes was born in the wood-snake year of the 12th cycle, i.e. in 1725. But the prior wood-snake (i.e. 1665) is more likely. One chronological reference of great importance is that he taught dByangs-'char divination to the young Si-tu Paṇ-chen in 1716, as mentioned in the latter's autobiography, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 49.1 (25b). I am indebted to Mr. Tashi Tsering for this reference.

[62] Khetsun Sangpo, vol. 8, p. 643, mentions De'u-dmar dge-bshes as one of this Khams-sprul's students. The modern scholar dBang-'dus in his biographical sketch of De'u-dmar in the recent (1986) reprint of the latter's *Shel gong* and *Shel phreng*, p. 7, mentions also sMin-grol-gling gdung-sras Padma-dbang-rgyal as his main teacher for rDzogs-chen precepts. He is also said in the same source, p. 8, to have studied extensively at Se-ra in Lhasa. (See De'u-dmar dge-bshes, *bDud nad gzhom*, introduction.)

[63] Si-tu and Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 523.7, refer to the Lha-thog

chieftain "Blo-gros-tshang" as one of Si-tu Paṇ-chen's patrons in the *sprel* year (1740).

[64] This according to Byams-pa-phrin-las, who seems to be recounting oral tradition (*skad 'dug*).

[65] De'u-dmar dge-bshes, *bDud nad gzhom,* introduction, p. 8. See also *ibid.*, p. 512, where he mentions rDza-stod Lha-chen-pa Dharma-manggalam (Chos-bkra-shis) as the one who originally requested him to write his famous *Shel phreng*, a work he finished several years later, in 1727 (me lug): *snga nas bzo sprul mchog gi yang rtser son pa/ rdza stod lha chen pa dharma manggalas nan bskul gnang bar mgo brtsams par g.yeng bas lo shas lus la/....* This was evidently the famous sGar-bris painter Chos-bkra-shis.

[66] Gangs can rig mdzod, vol. 14 (1990), pp. 1-96.

[67] De'u-dmar, *Rig pa bzo yi gnas*, pp. 95-96. The next work in the compilation seems to be an abridged adaptation of De'u-dmar's work. It is the *bZo rig pa tra nyer mkho sna tshogs*, compiled from earlier incomplete materials by the old monk Ngag-dbang-bstan-nyi-chos-'byung in 1845. The third work, the *Pa tra ka zhes pa rig pa bzo thams cad kyi rgyud* by Phun-tshogs-dge-legs, has evidently no close connection with the others. The fourth work, entitled *bZo rig kha shas kyi pa tra lag len ma*, appears to be a section excerpted from the unknown work *Rin po che pa tra*. The text is based on the manuscript of Burmiok Athing published by the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in 1981 (pp. 1-20).

[68] Reprinted in vol. 4 of Zhu-chen's collected writings, pp. 307-331 (*cha* 153a-165a).

[69] A. Chayet (1994), in her bibliography, p. 237, refers to another manual by Tshul-khrims-rin-chen, perhaps excerpted and published separately from one of his larger works. She lists it as: *sKu gzugs sgrub tshul yid bzhin nor bu*, xylograph, sDe-dge.

[70] Tucci (1949), vol. 1, pp. 148f., describes the work, and on p. 293 he indicates his familiarity with the relevant passage, for he states that Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho was also mentioned by Sum-pa mkhan-po as one of the most celebrated *lha bzo* or artists of Tibet.

[71] Klong-rdol bla-ma Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang (1719–1794/5), *bZo dang gso ba,* gSung 'bum, section *ma,* pp. 756-7 (7a-7b). Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 293, cites the relevant passage and gives a synopsis of Klong-rdol's list of great Tibetan artists, presenting them as the chief Tibetan authors on the subject of the arts (*bzo rig*). In Klong-rdol bla-ma's writings there is apparently also a work entitled *'Bras spungs mchod rten gyi ri mo.*

[72] I am indebted to Mr. Leonard van der Kuijp for referring me to this passage. On another section of this work see D. Martin (1991). Four modern editions of the work are known; the one cited here is that published by the Krung go'i Bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang (Lhasa: 1990).

[73] Gu-ru bKra-shis, p. 1002: *bod kyi yul 'dir ni/ sngon chos rgyal mes dbon gyi dus sprul pa'i bzo bos byas pa mang la/ de nas rim par sngon bris 'bur gnyis ka rgya bal gyi lag rgyun shas che las/ phyis 'bur bal lha dang bris rgya nag gi ri mo dang mthun shas che ba byung zhes zer ba ltar de dang de'i lugs srol dang 'dra rung du snang mod/.*

[74] This agrees with U. von Schroeder (1981), p. 406, who adds: "Chinese art had little, if any stylistic effect on eastern, central or southern Tibetan sculpture. It must be pointed out that the assumption of any considerable Chinese influence on Tibetan art is a complete fallacy...." This last comment refers of course to sculpture and *not* to painting.

[75] Gu-ru bKra-shis, p. 1004: *'di dag ni lhag pa'i lhas byin gyis brlabs pa'i ri mo ba yin pas khyad par du 'phags la/ gzhan bzo bo so so'i lag rtsal gyis ri mo 'dra min du ma snang ba rnams la dpyad pas mi khyab cing/.*

[76] That is, it would be impossible describe or classify them in an exhaustive way.

[77] On this work and its author, see the introduction of E. G. Smith (1970). Many works of Kong-sprul are also catalogued in D. Schuh (1976).

[78] Kong-sprul is also said to have written a work on the design or iconography of sacred art, which was included in his *Thun mong ma yin pa'i mdzod,* vol. 8 (*nya*). For descriptions of several minor works of Kong-sprul which have some connection with painting, see D. Schuh (1976), pp. 224f., 227, 240 and 285f.

[79] Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas, part 1, pp. 571-3 (*oṃ* 208b-209b).

[80] Somewhat similar names occur in other Tibetan accounts about Chinese Buddhist art. See also Hūṃ-ka-ra, dge-slong, alias sNgags-'chang Hūṃ-ka-ra-dza-ya, *brTag thabs padma dkar po'i 'chun po*, p. 9.2 (5a), who mentions the early Chinese emperor "rgyal-po 'U-zi-than" and his son "Cong-gi-ju-hūṃ" [*sic*] in connection with very early Chinese images of the Buddha.

[81] Presumably very few mKhyen-bris masterpieces had found their way to Khams and the author had not visited the main sites of mKhyen-bris murals in Central Tibet. It is, however, said that De'u-dmar dge-bshes had visited the Lhasa area and studied at Se-ra.

[82] I owe my knowledge of both texts to Mr. Tashi Tsering, who kindly allowed me to photocopy the relevant passages.

[83] See also the similar statement of Zhu-chen, *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*, p. 148.1-2 (*a* 74b).

[84] The word *nyams* (here: "mood expressed") is also the technical term in Indian and Tibetan poetics for "aesthetic experience" (Skt. *rasa*). The word *nyams* in more common usage also denotes "expression [of an emotion]," while *'gyur ba* refers to the inner emotion itself. See the definition of the compound *nyams 'gyur* in the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, p. 938. In De'u-dmar's text the word *'gyur* by itself seems also to be used for something like con-

toured or bulging shape (of muscles, etc., *sha 'gyur*), a meaning not attested in the dictionaries.

[85] Version M of the text reads: "The basic colors such as tea-color...."

[86] This may refer to the laying down of strokes of three progressively darker (or lighter) strips of color for an outlining effect. Perhaps this is something similar to the technique called *tsho sha dkar* or *phing bris* by some modern sMan-ris painters; see D. Jackson (1984), p. 136.

[87] "Compounded" means here mixed from more than one pigment or dye, i.e. *not* azurite.

[88] Here *nyams rnam 'gyur* ("atmosphere and expression") may just designate a more general idea of something like "style." One finds the word *nyams 'gyur* so translated for instance in the English section of the modern publication Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje *et al.* (1985), *Bod kyi thang ka*, pp. 8 and 197.

[89] De'u-dmar dge-bshes, *Kun gsal tshon*, ch. 30, p. 63b, also mentions sKyu-ra Lha-chen among the early artists who spread various indeterminate traditions in Tibet in the period of the early (i.e. 7th-9th-century) kings, and gives the names of several other artists of the period. See below, Appendix B, part 1, (2). But Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 15.6 (8a), states that Lha-chen sKyu-ra made an image of Karma-pa Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa (1110–1193) in the Bla-ma lha-khang chapel at 'Og-min Karma-dgon in Khams: *bla ma lha khang dul rten gtso khyad 'phags bdun ldan dus mkhyen sku skyu ra lha chen nas bzhengs pa zi khyim li ma bkod pa phul du byung ba chos drug gsung 'byon ma/*. If this is accurate, then he flourished in the 12th century or later. It seems that *lha chen* is an abbreviated title from the phrase *lha bzo chen po* or something similar. Presumably Lha-chen sKyu-ra was from the sKyu-ra clan; another famous member was sKyu-ra 'Jig-rten-mgon-po, founder of 'Bri-gung monastery, who will be mentioned again below. sKyu-ra was also the name of a district in Khams between lDan-ma and sGa; this was the main known place of settlement of the clan. Nowadays sKyu-ra is considered to be the lower part of sGa-pa district, and the town of Jyekundo is its main settlement and political center. sKyu-ra and lDan-ma are known for preserving a few examples of Chinese-influenced sacred art (mainly rock carvings) dating to the time of the early Tibetan kings, such as the 'Bis rNam-par-snang-mdzad.

[90] *smar = sma ra.*

[91] Maybe *bzo rig* "technique and art" should be read instead of *bzo rigs* "classes of technique and art."

[92] *Bla sku* can also mean an upper robe of figures in monastic dress. But here the less technical meaning "bodies of lamas" seems more likely.

[93] One would have expected the color and layout to be similar to those of the *earlier* Tibetan painting traditions, and not to the later.

[94] "Central Tibet" (*bod*) means here dBus and gTsang (but not Khams) provinces.

[95] C reads: "high (*mtho*) shoulders".

[96] I have left the to me unintelligible phrase *'ba' sam* untranslated.

[97] Kar-shod, here wrongly spelled dKar-shod, is an area in northern Chab-mdo district of Khams, below the monastery of Karma. See Khetsun Sangpo, vol. 7, p. 639: *chab mdo'i nye skor kar shod/.*

[98] For a brief sketch of his life, see Karma Thinley (1980), pp. 117-119.

[99] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 22.4 (12b): *karma pa bdud 'dul rdo rje'i phyag bris nyid kyi thang ka/.*

[100] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 42, note 72.

[101] On this term, see below, note 107.

[102] The author mentions, p. 120, a number of Bhutanese places when discussing the origins of dyes and pigments, and as will be seen below, he also mentions artists who were famous in Bhutan.

[103] I have heard from one painter the rumor that the anonymous publisher borrowed the original from the library of the late bDud-'joms Rin-po-che.

[104] It mentions on p. 117 both European artificial ultramarine and natural ultramarine from lapis: *phyi gling sbyar tshon mthing nag zhig kyang 'dug// rgya mtsho'i mtha' nas kā ma sindhu zhes// gser g.yu mu med* [=*men*] *las byung mthing de ni// mig sman yin te mthing la dmar dangs can//.* Thus the work could not have been composed before the 1830s, when artificial ultramarine first came on the market. On p. 118f there is a reference to Calcutta: *rgya gar ka li ka ta la sogs pa//.*

[105] The word *spang shun* might, however, be the same as *spang zhun*, which the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, p. 1653, defines in one sense as "the watery mixture of green paint" (*tshon ljang gu'i khu ba*). (The other meaning is a certain mineral medicinal substance.)

[106] Or could *mthing shun* be synonymous with *mthing zhun*, which the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, p. 1209, defines as "the watery mixture resulting from the grinding of azurite" (*mthing btul ba'i khu ba*)? The similar word *mthing shul* was used by some sMan-ris painters for a medium azurite blue, and this is how I took it here. See D. Jackson (1984), p. 78.

[107] As mentioned above, the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, p. 938, defines the compound *nyams 'gyur* as two separate ideas: The word *nyams* denotes "expression [of an emotion]," while *'gyur ba* refers to the inner emotion itself. *Nyams* is also a technical term equivalent to Skt. *rasa* ("aesthetic experience") in poetics, and hence the translation above as "mood expressed." But as also alluded to, *nyams 'gyur* together can also be more loosely translated simply as "style" or "aesthetic effect."

[108] "Lho 'brug lugs kyi tshon sbyor lag len mdor bsdus," *gTam tshogs* (Dharamsala, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives), vol. 1, no. 2 (1981). On painters see pp. 13f.

[109] Ladakh Ngawang Tsering of Nurla, oral communication, Hamburg, August, 1994; Thrangu Rinpoche, Bodhnath, March, 1995.

[110] Ven. Tenga Rinpoche, oral communication, August, 1994; Thrangu Rinpoche, Bodhnath, March, 1995.

[111] Bir, Lama Pema Tashi, 1984.

[112] It was published in the compilation *Ri mo'i thig tshad dang tshon gyi lag len tshad ldan don du gnyer ba rnams la nye bar mkho ba mthong ba don ldan*, pp. 219-260.

[113] According to the brief biography in Khetsun Sangpo, vol. 8, p. 641, the Khams-sprul Kun-dga'-bstan-'phel was born in mDo-khams rDza-rgyud dBes-mda'.

[114] On p. 242 he states that the general proportions for the Buddha are also acceptable for goddesses.

[115] Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas, p. 219: *mthong na mi mthun med pa rgyal ba'i sku// mig lam dag la mdzes par ma 'gyur na// cha tshad ldan par slob kyang gad mo'i gnas//.*

[116] Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas, p. 242: *zhi khro kun la thig gdab bri ba ni// bzo bo'i rgyal po yin par bod mkhas bzhed// 'on kyang lag khrid zhal rgyun gtan 'bebs gtso//.*

[117] As will be described below, Phrin-las-rab-'phel was a famous artist from Karma whom Si-tu Paṇ-chen patronized in the 1720s.

[118] A master by this name died in 1729 in Khams near Derge, and Si-tu Paṇ-chen presided at his final rites. See Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 501.5 (*na* 252b). His work on proportions, which Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas on p. 251 refers to as a written exposition of proportions (*thig yig*), is also referred to by Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs (1985), p. 86, as "Che-tshang gSung-rab-rgya-mtsho's treatise, the *Du ku la.*"

[119] p. 229: *zhi ba'i mdzes 'dzum sgar bris shin tu legs// khro bo'i zhal ras sman gsar shin tu rngam// khro 'dzum ldan pa rngam brjid sman rnying che//.*

[120] p. 245: *sman gsar 'dra rigs 'dre ma ri mkhar lugs// 'gying ba'i rnam 'gyur chen po ngo mtshar gtso// sman rnying bal ris sor gnas 'gying cha chung// sgar bris gsar rnying 'gying tshul ran pa'o//.*

[121] p. 253: *sgar sman khro bo gnod sbyin khros pa'i tshul// sman gsar dwags bris 'dres pa srin po nyams// mkhyen lugs sman gsar gshin rje khro tshul dang// mthun par slob dpon mkhas pa'i zhal las thos//.*

[122] Thrangu Rinpoche, Bodhnath, March 1995. This work is described in more detail below in chapter 13, in connection with more recent sGar-bris traditions of Khams.

[123] One or both works are said to have been with the Kaḥ-thog dBon-sprul at the time of his death. I am indebted to Mr. E. G. Smith and Mr. Tashi Tsering for this information.

[124] In my English translation, I deviated from the original Tibetan text in a few places, such as where the "Ze'u-thang" seen by sMan-thang-pa is wrongly portrayed as an unpainted cloth thangka (actually it is specifically said to have been a *painted* work). Some changes were based on additional information conveyed to me orally by the author, such as regarding Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan in connection with mKhyen-brtse.

[125] The Tibetan, p. 14: *rgan rabs tshos ngag rgyun la'ang/ sku gzugs rnams bod bris dang/ yul ljongs rgya bris ltar byas na legs tshul gyis bshad tshul yod/.*

[126] Gega Lama, in an interview, Bodhnath, March 1995, explained that the history in his book was based in part on notes set down by one of his co-students from what their teacher, Thang-bla-tshe-dbang, told them.

[127] Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje *et al.* (1985), p. 9 : *skabs der* [=Ming and Ch'ing dynasties] *thog mar sman thang pa dang mkhyen brtse ba zhes pa'i ri mo'i lugs....*

[128] Probably from an earlier edition of bKras dgon lo rgyus rtsom 'bri tshogs chung (1992), pp. 22-23, which mentions the contributions of sMan-thang-pa in painting the murals of the Tashilhunpo.

[129] *Ri mo mkhan rnams la nye bar mkho ba'i lag len dang sbyin bdag gi mtshan nyid*, Ri mo'i thig tshad, pp. 142-145.

[130] bsTan-pa-rab-brtan, p. 60: *rus tshugs bal bris shas che ba'i byi'u sgang pa'i phyag rgyun gyi legs cha blangs shing zhan cha dor ba'i sgo nas rang lugs gsar gtod mdzad thog/ khyad par du yul ljongs rgyag pa'i srol gtod pa yin te/ yul ljongs dang rgyan ris kyi bkod pa hrob zhib snyom la mdzes pa/ tshon mdangs cung zad skya la snum shas che zhing gser ris zhib tshags pa ni sman thang gi lugs su grags/.*

[131] *Ibid.*: *rus tshugs dang 'gyings stabs gong dang cung zad mi 'dra ba dang/ byad* [=*khyad*] *par drag po'i rigs kyi 'gyings stabs dang rol stabs drag shul che la bde nyams dod pa/ khro bo dang dkyil 'khor 'bri skabs dmigs gsal gyi khyad chos ldan pa/ tshon mdangs cung zad har la rgyan ris kyis gang ba/ yul ljongs bkod pa zhib pa/ bcad mdangs mngon gsal dod pa bcas ni mkhyen bris kyi lugs su grags/.*

[132] *Ibid.*: *yang yar stod du sprul sku nam mkha' bkra shis zhes pa zhig byung/ khong gis e nas skal ldan shar phyogs pa dkon mchog phan bde bya ba de las sman ris kyi rgyun bslabs/ rus tshugs rgya gar li ma dang sman thang lugs gzhir bzhag pa la/ ming rgyal rabs skabs kyi rgyal srol ri mo'i si thang zhes pa nas yul ljongs bkod pa dang/ tshon mdangs byed stangs kyi khyad chos rnams blangs te/ gzhi la 'bru tshon hang tshon ltar srab cing sa gnam gnyis nas rang ris phyir cung zad mngon pa/ lha zhi ba rnams kyi spyan phra zhing chung ba/ tshon mdangs dmar shas che cung che la zhib tshags shing 'jam sha dod pa bcas sgar bris kyi lugs su grags pa bcas phyag rgyun de dag nyams pa med par da lta nga tsho'i mi rabs bar du rgyun mthud nas gnas pa lags so/.*

[133] The *lNga brgya pa* is a collection of illustrations of five hundred deities from major collections of initiations. An early-19th-century Peking edition of such a collection

has been reproduced in M. Tachikawa *et al.* (1995). The *Sum brgya pa* similarly consists of three hundred such illustrations, as can be seen from the book *Bod brgyud nang bstan lha ris kyi thig rtsa* by sKal-bzang of A-mdo (mTsho sngon mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1992). The author describes (pp. 291f) the single, somewhat defective exemplar of the *Sum brgya pa* available to him. It served as the basis for his section *Lha ris sum brgya pa* ("300-Deity Pantheon") on pp. 83-232, though the deities were rather crudely redrawn.

[134] On p. 18 he wrongly identifies Byi'u-sgang-pa with Ri-mkhar-ba.

[135] The title *bka' chen* is in the Tashilhunpo tradition the equivalent to the scholastic title of *dge bshes* (*bka' rab 'byams pa dge ba'i bshes gnyen*).

Part II

The Great Tibetan Painters and Their Styles: A Historical Sketch



Fig. 9. Phag-mo-gru-pa. A recent drawing, Tibetan artist in Dharamsala, India.

Chapter 1

Early References to Tibetan Painters and Styles

Both Tibetan and Western scholarship generally agree in discerning two main stages in the development of Tibetan Buddhist painting: first, the initial introduction of foreign—mainly Indian—styles, and second, the subsequent realization of distinctively Tibetan styles, which incorporated progressively more Chinese influences.

The present study, however, will concentrate on investigating the later, more properly Tibetan developments, i.e. from roughly the mid 15th century onward. No attempt will be made to describe in detail the earliest sites of Tibetan Buddhist art and the foreign influences that exerted themselves during the earlier periods, especially through eastern India, Nepal and Kashmir. These themes have already received intensive study in recent years.[136]

Nevertheless, it should be explained from the beginning that the styles of painting employed by Tibetan artists in the early 15th century in central Tibet, in both Dbus and gTsang provinces, had originally taken shape predominantly under the influence of Indic Buddhist styles, and after about the year 1200, especially as practiced by the Newar artisans of the Kathmandu Valley, many of whom visited Tibet and worked there. The latter style, which was also learned and further developed by Tibetans, was known to later generations as the "Nepalese" (or, more accurately for recent times, the "Newar") style of painting, i.e. the Bal-bris.

Some Mentions of 12th- and Early-13th-century Painters

Many of the greatest Tibetan religious masters from the 12th century onward (i.e. from the earliest period for which reasonably detailed records exist) cultivated at least some knowledge of sacred art. Quite a few also tried their hand at some form of artistic practice. For instance, Phag-mo-gru-pa rDo-rje-rgyal-po (1110–1170), the father of many bKa'-brgyud-pa lineages, is recorded to have practiced painting as a young monk in the early 12th century. He is said as a youth to have spontaneously learned painting (along with reading and writing) and to have later acted as chief secretary and painter for his mkhan-po lDing-nge Tshul-khrims-'bar at the Bya-khyi lha-khang.[137]

Slob-dpon bSod-rnams-rtse-mo (1142–1182) of the Sa-skya 'Khon noble lineage, the uncle of Sa-skya Paṇḍita, was also highly adept at painting. When his teacher Phywa-pa Chos-kyi-seng-ge (1109–1169) died, bSod-rnam-rtse-mo painted a realistic, life-size depiction of him.[138] bSod-rnams-rtse-mo's younger brother rje-btsun Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1147–1216), too, is said to have done some painting.[139]

The outstanding master Sa-skya Paṇḍita Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan (1182–1251) like his uncle bSod-nams-rtse-mo pursued multifarious interests as a scholar, and he was among other things particularly gifted as a painter. A famous mural by him of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, the *'Jam dbyangs gar gzigs ma* at the dBu-rtse bla-brang in Sa-skya, survived and was admired until the 1960s.[140] An-



Fig. 10. sLob-dpon bSod-nams-rtse-mo. From the Sa skya bka' 'bum, Derge edition (1736), vol. ca, fol. 220b.

other mural of Mañjuśrī by his hand was the *'Jam dbyangs spyan gzigs ma* by his teaching throne at Shangs Sreg-zhing in gTsang.[141] Still another of his famous wall-paintings was the so-called "*sDom brtson dam pa*," a symbolic mural that he is said to have painted at Samye (bSam-yas), the earliest Tibetan Buddhist monastery.[142] Sa-skya Paṇḍita was also one of the first Tibetans recorded to have



Fig. 11. rJe-btsun Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan. From the Sa skya bka' 'bum, Derge edition (1736), vol. ta, fol. 2b.

written an iconometrical treatise, although his work has not been extant for many centuries.[143]

Slightly later than Sa-paṇ was spyan-snga 'Bri-gung gling-pa Shes-rab-'byung-gnas (1187–1255). The latter in the early 1220s was inspired, when staying at the Kho-char temple in sPu-rangs in western Tibet, to depict the events of his master 'Jig-rten-mgon-po's life in mural paintings according to the biography he had written called the "*Phyogs bcu dus gsum ma*."[144] He executed sketches there on the temple walls, and afterward the tradition of painting the biography in this way also spread to the 'Bri-gung mother monastery in dBus Province of central Tibet as well as further west to



Fig. 12. Sa-skya Paṇḍita. From the Sa skya bka' 'bum, Derge edition (1736), vol. na, fol. 170b.

Ladakh.[145] A few decades earlier (late 1100s/early 1200s?) the great 'Bri-gung-pa founder 'Jig-rten-gsum-mgon (1143–1217) in his *dkar chag* to the building of a bKra-shis-sgo-mang stūpa mentioned the main Tibetan artist by name: dpon-chen-po Tshul-riṇ (=Tshul-khrims-rin-chen?). Also mentioned was the great Newar master artist Māṇibhadra, perfect in his knowledge of religious art and famed as an "art emanation" (*bzo'i sprul pa*), whom 'Jig-rten-gsum-mgon had evidently invited to Tibet from Nepal.[146] From this same period there was reputedly a thangka painted by the artist sKal-ldan Yar-lung sprul-sku, who is

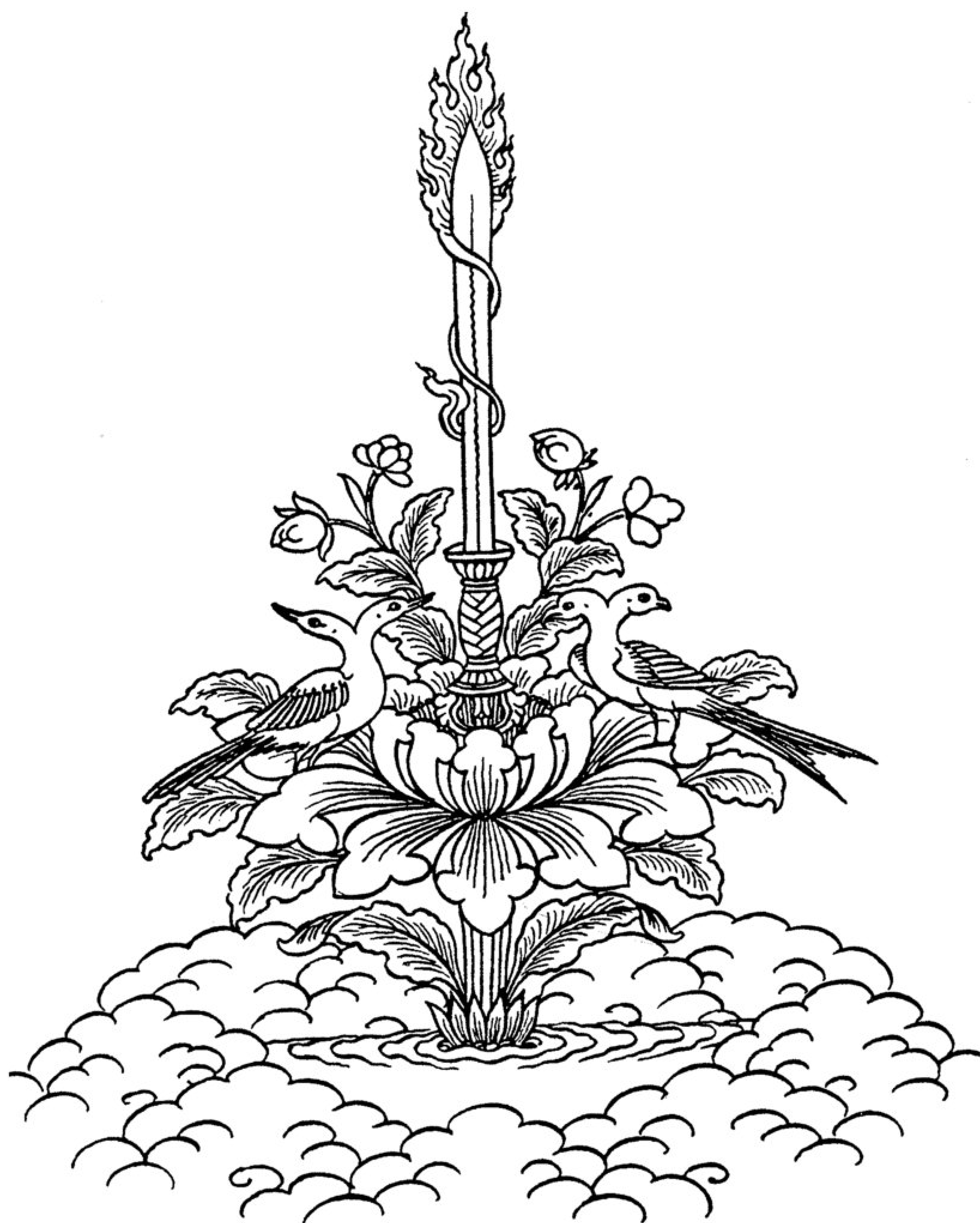


Fig. 13. The sDom brtson dam pa or 'Jam dbyangs phyag mtshan ri mo.
Originally drawn by Sa-skya Paṇḍita at bSam-yas. A recent drawing, Tibetan artist in India.

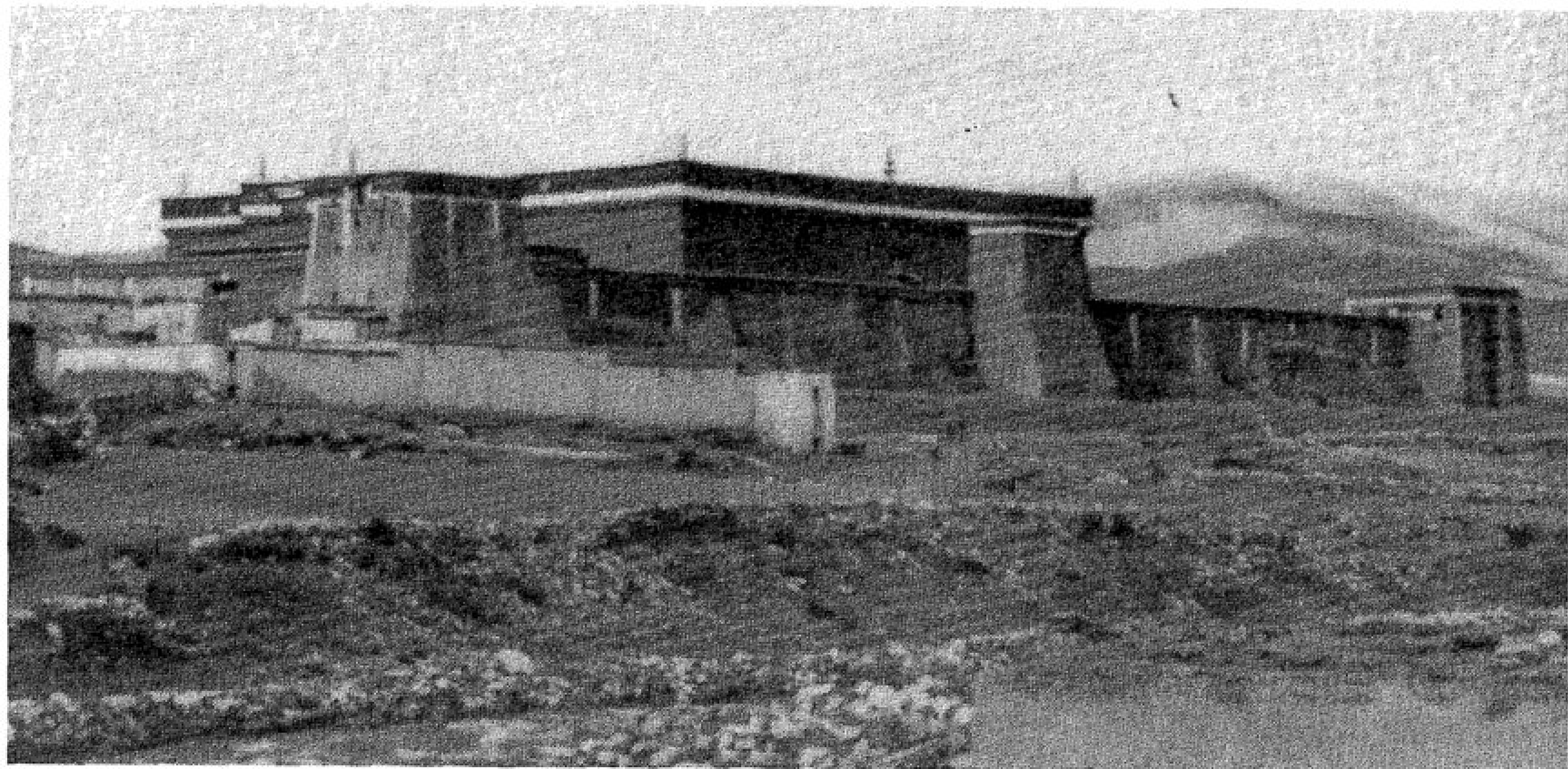


Fig. 14. The Lha-khang Chen-mo of Sa-skya, the southern monastery.

said to have used as his pigment some blood from the nosebleed of the early gter-ston Gu-ru Chos-dbang (1212–1270).[147]

Most of the above artists and masters probably worked in what would later have been called an "old Newar style" (*bal bris rnying pa*) or just "Newar style" (*bal bris*), that is to say, in a Pāla-influenced Indo-Tibetan style similar to that employed by contemporaneous Newars.[148] For instance, 'Gro-mgon, the son of Nyang-ral Nyi-ma'i-'od-zer (1124?–1192?), and who therefore must have flourished in the late 1100s and early 1200s, is said to have had painted (or at least commissioned) one hundred and eight large thangkas one story tall in a "Nepalese style" (*bal ris*).[149]

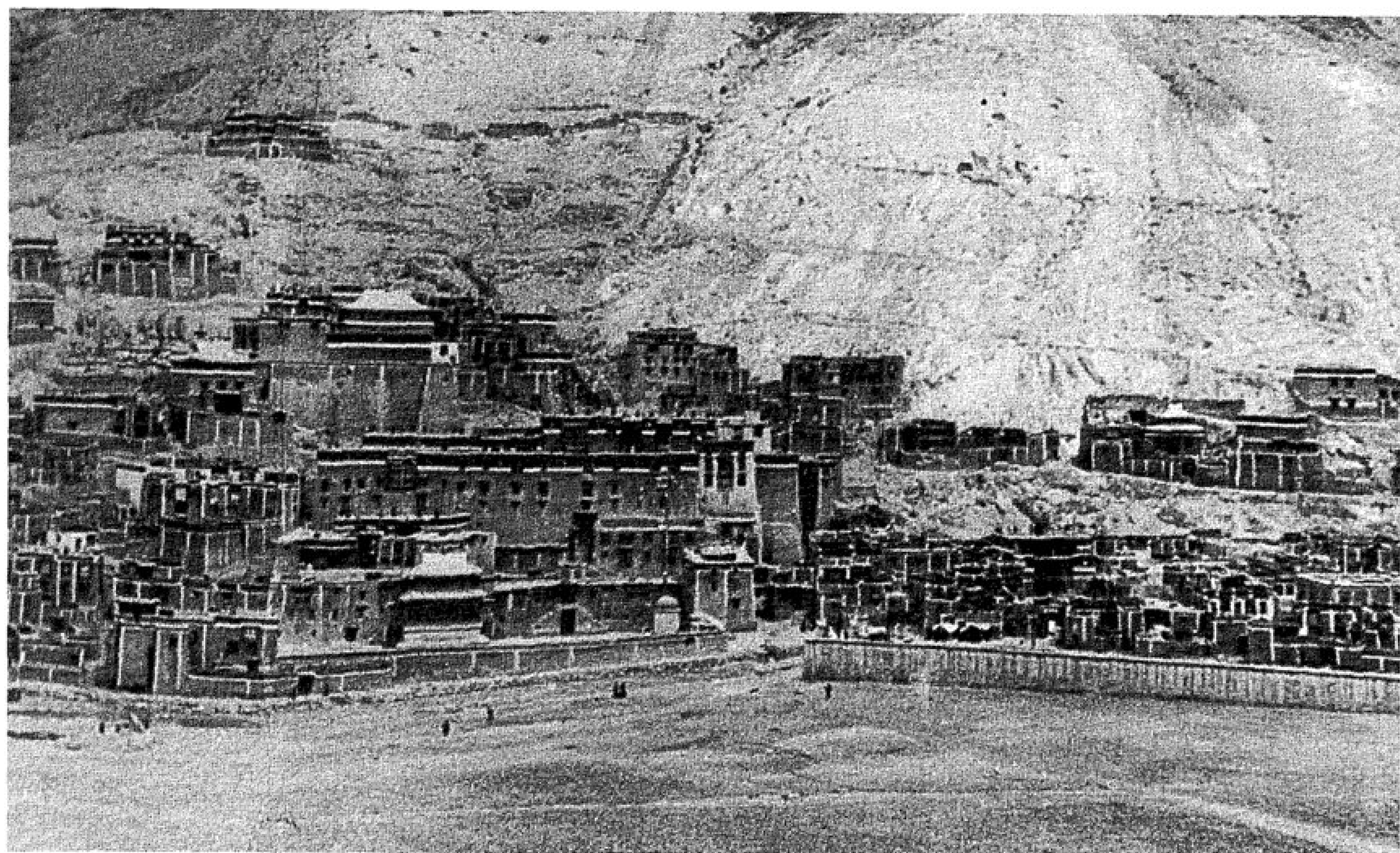


Fig. 15. Sakya Monastery, the northern temples. Photograph H. E. Richardson.

Sacred Art as the Subject of Critical Discussion

Most of the Tibetans who are known to have painted in the 12th through early 15th centuries are thus remembered mainly because they were otherwise famous as religious masters. The study of sacred art—or at least of the techniques for correctly proportioning and producing sacred images—was an important part of one of the five major fields of knowledge (*rig pa'i gnas*) cultivated by great scholars within Mahāyāna Buddhist scholasticism. Yet even for non-scholastics, sacred art played such an important role in Buddhist ritual and life that most masters were obliged to know something about it, especially if they were involved in the building of temples or commissioning of major works of art.

The subject of sacred art could also become the subject of public discussion or even critical debate among Buddhist masters. Already in the works of 'Bri-gung 'Jig-rten-gsum-mgon (1143–1217) one witnesses the latter's criticisms of "learned scholars" who follow what he takes to be false proportions of sacred images set forth in a certain "Sūtra" source.[150] Similarly in the life of the Mad Saint of gTsang, gTsang-smyon Heruka (1452–1507), there took place a telling incident which—although it dates to a somewhat later period, the late 15th century—shows how sacred art could become the subject of public discussion.[151] At this time (ca. the late 1490s), gTsang-smyon visited Lo Mustang (Glo-bo sMon-thang), arriving near the end of the making and decorating of the "Golden Temple" (gSer-gyi-lha-khang) there. One day after gTsang-smyon's arrival, the local noble lama Chos-rje Blo-gros-rgyal-mtshan[152] sponsored a celebration for the artisans and workers called a *bcu tshigs.*[153] A great convocation was held in the upper story of a temple which downstairs held an image of the Buddha Śākyamuni and the Sixteen Elders. The chapel in which they sat had as its main figure Vajradhara. Surrounding that figure were the eighty great tantric adepts (*mahāsiddha*) in a shrine room which was wondrously laid out and decorated, making those present feel like they were in a celestial palace. At the head of the assembly were a certain bla-ma Glo-bo-pa (a local rNying-ma master highly esteemed by the Glo-bo ruler) seated on a throne with a slightly higher mat,[154] and on a slightly lower seat, the eccentric yogi gTsang-smyon. Also present were many others including the Glo-bo king, ministers and many artisans.

After the first round of tea had nearly come to an end, the great adept gTsang-smyon said to bla-ma Glo-bo-pa: "You are here as the head of the assembly row. How would it be if I asked you some questions?"

"Sir, it would of course be fine," replied the lama, though he sounded a bit flustered.

"Well, in that case, could you explain what the proportions are of this Vajradhara image—the main figure in this chapel—from his head protuberance down to his throne? And further: What does it mean to be in accord with these proportions? What are the faults with not being in accord? And what are the benefits of accordance?"

The other lama sat there for a while intently fingering his rosary and rocking his body back and forth in agitation. Finally he replied: "I can't really tell you in detail about that. The planning of the deities was not mine, sir."

But gTsang-smyon did not let the unfortunate fellow off the hook, questioning him for some time about his religious practice. The local lama showed himself incapable of giving good answers, which provoked a few sarcastic remarks from gTsang-smyon, who then said: "Ah! I was just joking around. You don't need to be angry!" Then after a further disillusioned remark about many blind people acting as guides due to the blindness of the times, gTsang-smyon then asked:

"Well then, who was the one who executed the planning and layout (*bkod pa*) for these murals?"

"The person in charge of layout (*zhal bkod pa*) is this religious teacher from dPal-'khor-bde-chen (of Gyantse)," the other replied, pointing to a mature monk who was seated at the head of one of the rows.

"If you are from dPal-'khor-bde-chen," said gTsang-smyon, turning to the older monk, "I, too, am from dPal-'khor-bde-chen. Let's the two of us debate about tantric ritual practice such as

ritual dance, the system of maṇḍala proportions and ritual music, or about the tantras, such as the three tantras of the Hevajra cycle!"

"Sir, even though I have studied well ritual practice and the tantras, I don't feel confident enough to speak about it in your eminence's presence."

"Well then, did you ever see me at dPal-'khor-bde-chen?"

"Sir, I saw a young monk who was ill-behaved, sir," answered the religious scholar, who then seized the opportunity to change the subject and say: "I would like to request your eminence to talk about those questions that were just raised and in particular to give an exposition of tantric ritual dance and proportions of maṇḍalas!"

gTsang-smyon replied: "Naturally! Minister Tshe-bzang, fetch me some beer!"[155] Then he proceeded to give a description of the deities in maṇḍalas of a certain cycle, followed by a very extensive exposition of the bodily proportions of deities and related topics, explaining at length how these themes had been explained in Tantras such as the *sDom byung* (Samvarodaya) and the *mKha' 'gro ma rdo rje gur*, as well as in different Indian and Tibetan treatises. In the meantime, much to the wonderment and admiration of the whole assembly, while giving this lengthy exposition the great adept had also managed to finish off the entire contents of a great silver tub of beer. The minister Tshe-bzang said: "Not only was the exposition like the rising of the sun, but also the beer-offering (*phyag phud*) was not like drinking; it was in fact [more like] milking!" at which, all those present broke into laughter.

Some Authorities and Painters of the Mid 13th and 14th Centuries

Since learned Tibetan masters took an active interest in the theory and practice of Buddhist art, it was natural that they soon also began summarizing their learning in written form. One of the earliest Tibetans known to have written a formal treatise on art of some note was Tsha-ba-rong-pa bSod-nams-'od-zer (fl. second half of the 1200s). He was a disciple of Sa-skya Paṇḍita's nephew 'Phags-pa Blo-gros-rgyal-mtshan (1235–1280), and he penned a work on art technique entitled *sKu gzugs bzhengs tshul yon tan 'byung gnas* ("The Source of Good Qualities: [a Treatise on] the Methods for Making Images"), a work that in recent times seems to have been rare even in Tibet.[156]

One religious master of the late 13th and early 14th centuries who excelled in painting and who was active mainly in South-central Tibet (gTsang) and was gZhon-nu-rgyal-po (1266–1343). According to his brief biography found in the *Blue Annals*, he learned painting from the master dPon Sang-she (the title *dpon* "chief, master [artist]" identifying Sang-she [=Sangs-rgyas-shes-rab?] as a professional artist). gZhon-nu-rgyal-po became a master of the old tantric tradition, especially of the [rDzogs-chen] *sNying thig*. Subsequently his skill in painting was very useful because later at mKhar-chu when he requested the *sNying thig* teachings from his teacher, Me-long-rdo-rje (1243–1303), he had nothing in the way of material goods to offer his master, so instead he worked for him diligently for two summers as a painter.[157]

The Penetration of Yüan-Dynasty Chinese Influences

Although some Chinese Buddhist art was introduced into Tibet during the 7th through 9th centuries, the early period of the spread of Buddhism in Tibet, few substantial traces of it have survived in central Tibet (dBus and gTsang).[158] For the second period of Buddhism's diffusion in Tibet (i.e. from about the 11th century onward), some of the earliest monuments survive in western Tibet, and in the earliest wall paintings there (which date from about the 11th or 12th century), Chinese influences were negligible. Here it was Kashmiri and other Indic influences that predominated for centuries. In Central and South-central Tibet (dBus and gTsang provinces) some other influences made themselves felt at times: at the early monasteries of g.Ye-dmar[159] and gNas-gsar, for instance, some researchers have detected a distinctive Central Asian style.[160]

By the Sa-skya/Yüan period (mid 13th to mid 14th centuries), however, certain Chinese art forms, such as the stylized rocks in the landscapes, gradually came into use among some painters in central Tibet.[161] This evidently reflected the spread of a basically Newar Yüan-court style in Tibet. One feature of this Yüan-Newar style was the acceptance also of clouds as a prominent decorative motif in the background.[162] An early-20th-century traveller from Khams seems to have noticed a similar painting of this period and he referred, for instance, to seeing at the Dar-rgyas chos-lding dbu-rtse in Lho-kha a twenty-one-painting set depicting the "[Sixteen] Elders in a Chinese tradition of the period of the Mongolian (Yüan) emperors, in something like a mixture of Newar and Chinese styles."[163]

Otherwise, Chinese influence was particularly obvious, as would be expected, in paintings where the original themes or cycles had come from China, such as depictions of the Sixteen Elders, the Four Great Guardians, and of certain versions of the Major Deeds of the Buddha.[164] A few important murals of the 14th century that were done in a Chinese manner or strongly reflected that inspiration were noted already by Tucci at Zhwa-lu in particular.[165] However, to gauge in a general way the extent of Chinese stylistic penetration one should not concentrate exclusively on these paintings, but should look to depictions of themes which were not typically Chinese. In most paintings of the mid or late 14th century, in dBus and gTsang provinces at least, such Chinese elements remained subordinate to the dominant Bal-ris style.

Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub at Zhwa-lu

One great scholar of the 14th century who was deeply involved in the study of religious art was Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (1290–1364).[166] In addition to his well-known activities at Zhwa-lu in planning the murals there, he also wrote a manual



Fig. 16. Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub. After Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs (1993), p. 60.

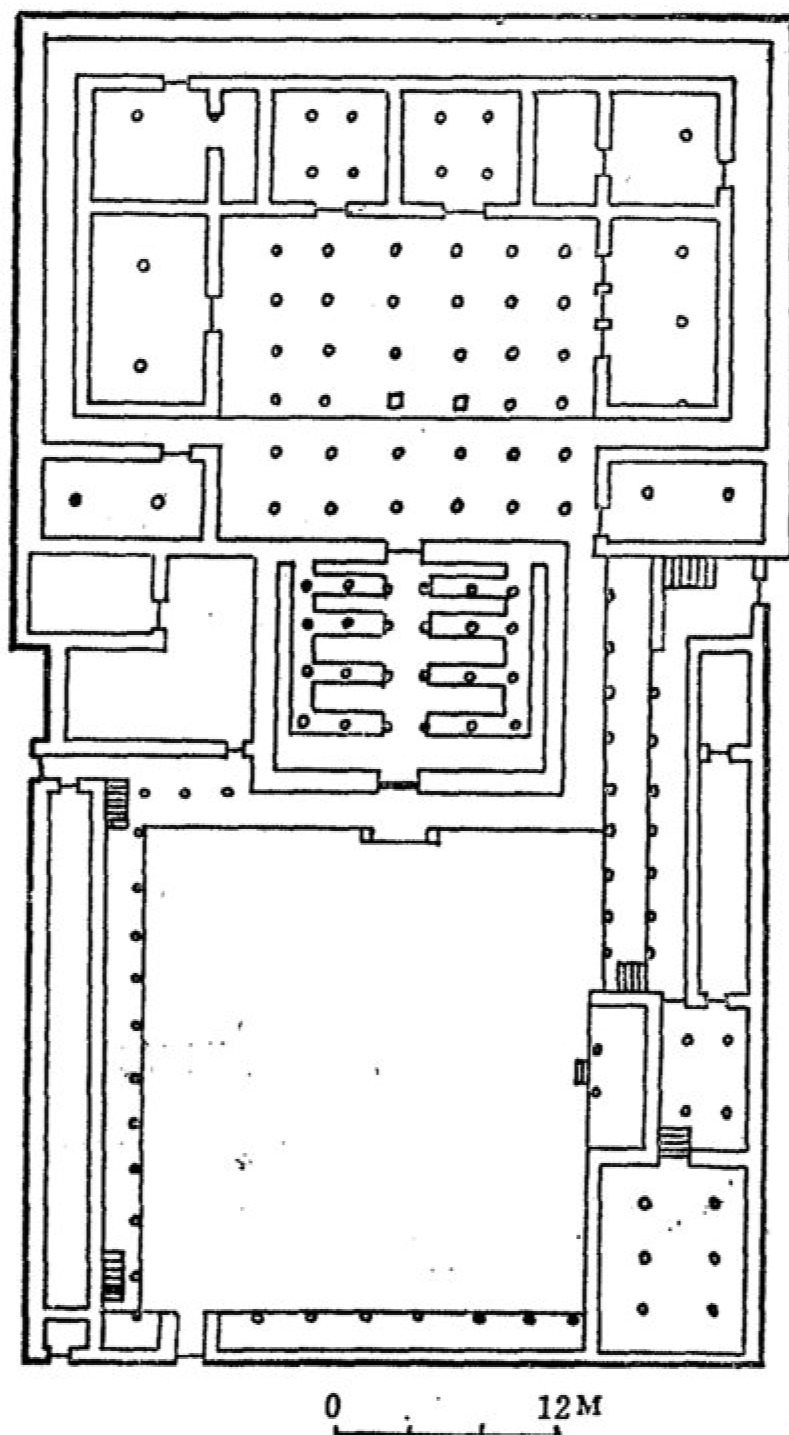


Fig. 17. Zhwa-lu, floor plan of the ground floor of the gSer-khang. After Southern Ethnology and Archeology, vol. 4 (1991), p. 214.

on iconometry which was referred to by later Tibetan scholars, though I have not been able to locate it in his published collected works. It was used by Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen (1697–1774) in Khams in the early or mid 18th century, and it may still turn up.[167]

A mask attributed to the workmanship of Bu-ston himself survived at Zhwa-lu down to the present century, but it was kept under the seal of the Shigatse governor.[168]

It has also been said that he personally "sketched" in one of the Zhwa-lu murals the maṇḍalas of the 'Jam-dpal cycle, but what the relevant sources in fact state is that he planned or designed (*bkod pa*) them.[169] Actually directing and overseeing the painting work of the artists was the religious teacher bSod-nams-rgyal-mtshan and for part of the murals also Bu-ston's pupil gZhon-nu-bsod-nams, both of whom worked to ensure that the master painters carried out Bu-ston's plan correctly.[170]

Bu-ston's greatest student in the field of art and techniques is said to have been one rGyal-sras Sher-'bum [=Shes-rab-'bum] who in Bu-ston's sixty-third year (1352) designed and had built from bricks a stūpa measuring in height sixty-nine of Bu-ston's own cubit lengths. Afterwards he is also said to have supervised the construction of a stūpa for Bu-ston's chief disciple Lo-tsā-ba Rin-chen-rnam-rgyal (1318–1388).[171]

The master artist mChims bSod-nams-'bum, whose name occurs at least three times in the Zhwa-lu mural inscriptions, was one of the chief painters employed by Bu-ston and his noble patrons at Zhwa-lu.[172]

A recent study has hypothesized that mChims bSod-nams-'bum was one of the Newar prodigy Aniko's "master disciples" who carried on the Newar style of the Yüan imperial court in 14th-century Tibet.[173]

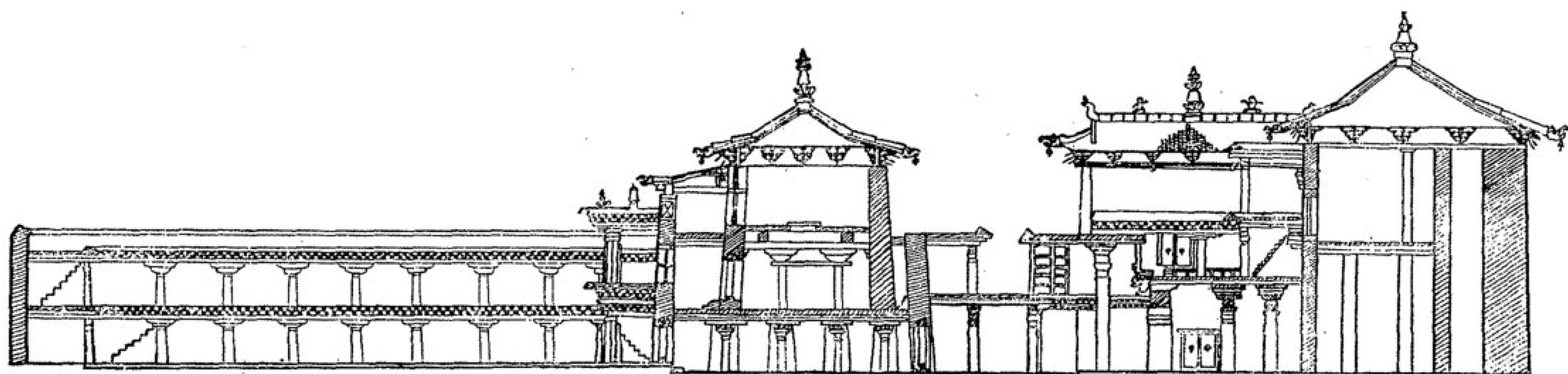


Fig. 18. Cross-section of Zhwa-lu. After Southern Ethnology and Archeology, vol. 4 (1991), p. 217.



Fig. 19. Sketch of detail of Zhwa-lu mural. After Southern Ethnology and Archeology, vol. 4 (1991), p. 224.



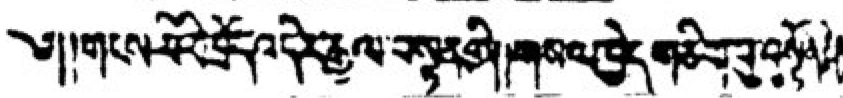


Fig. 20. Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub. Xylograph from the Derge edition of the Kanjur, vol. 315, fol. 2a right.





Fig. 21. Ngor-chen Kun-dga'-bzang-po. From the Sa skya bka' 'bum, Derge edition (1736), vol. ba, fol. 21b.

Patronage of Newar Painters at Ngor

In the 1430s and 1440s, the master Ngor-chen Kun-dga'-bzang-po (1382–1456) intensively patronized Newar painters at his monastery of Ngor E-waṃ-chos-ldan, an important center of Sa-skya-pa tantric teaching and study that he had founded in 1429 in a remote area about twenty kilometers southwest of Shigatse in gTsang. One relevant feature of the Ngor-pa tradition in this connection was that it generally did not allow depictions of the tantric yi-dams or of their maṇḍalas to be painted as murals on the temple walls. (They were, after all, an esoteric tradition.) Could this also account in part for the wealth of such depictions at Ngor in the form of scroll paintings? Later abbots of Ngor, too, continued to patronize very actively the making of sacred scroll paintings.

One of the best sources for information about early sacred art at Ngor is the biography of the monastery's founder Kun-dga'-bzang-po by the relatively late biographer mNga'-ris-pa Sangs-rgyas-phun-tshogs (1649–1705), who served as 25th abbot of Ngor. This biography, which was composed in 1688, describes the following major sets of paintings and statues that Kun-dga'-bzang-po commissioned at Ngor:

[1] To fulfill the wishes of his deceased teacher Shar-chen Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan (d. 1406), Ngor-chen commissioned in the lower inner shrine room (*gtsang khang 'og*



Fig. 22. Shar-chen Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan. From the Thob yig rgya mtsho of Ngor-chen Kun-dga'-bzang-po, vol. ka, fol. 1 (Sa skya pa'i bka' 'bum, vol. 9, p. 49).



Fig. 23. Sa-bzang 'Phags-pa. From the Thob yig rgya mtsho of Ngor-chen Kun-dga'-bzang-po, vol. ka, fol. 1 (Sa skya pa'i bka' 'bum, vol. 9, p. 49).

ma) of the assembly hall a great gilt statue of the Buddha Śākyamuni with gandhola.[174]

[2] To fulfill the wishes of his deceased teacher Buddha-shrī (1339–1419), he commissioned the eleven great paintings (*bris sku chen mo*) of the complete series of *Lam-'bras* lineage masters. Furthermore he commissioned in the upper inner chapel (*gtsang khang steng ma*), which is now called the "Lam-'bras chapel" (*lam 'bras lha khang*), a set of statues of the Lam-'bras lineage, beginning with a gilt image of Vajradhara and clay images of the subsequent lineage from Nairātmyā to Buddha-shrī. He also commissioned a smaller set of clay images of the same Lam-'bras lineage which were kept in the "Lam-zab chapel." On the walls of the lamas' residence chapels he had painted the lineal masters for the lineages of Hevajra, Cakrasamvara and Guhyasamāja, as well as innumerable depictions of Buddhas and bodhisattvas.[175]

Some further information about Lam-'bras lineage thangkas was added a few lines later:

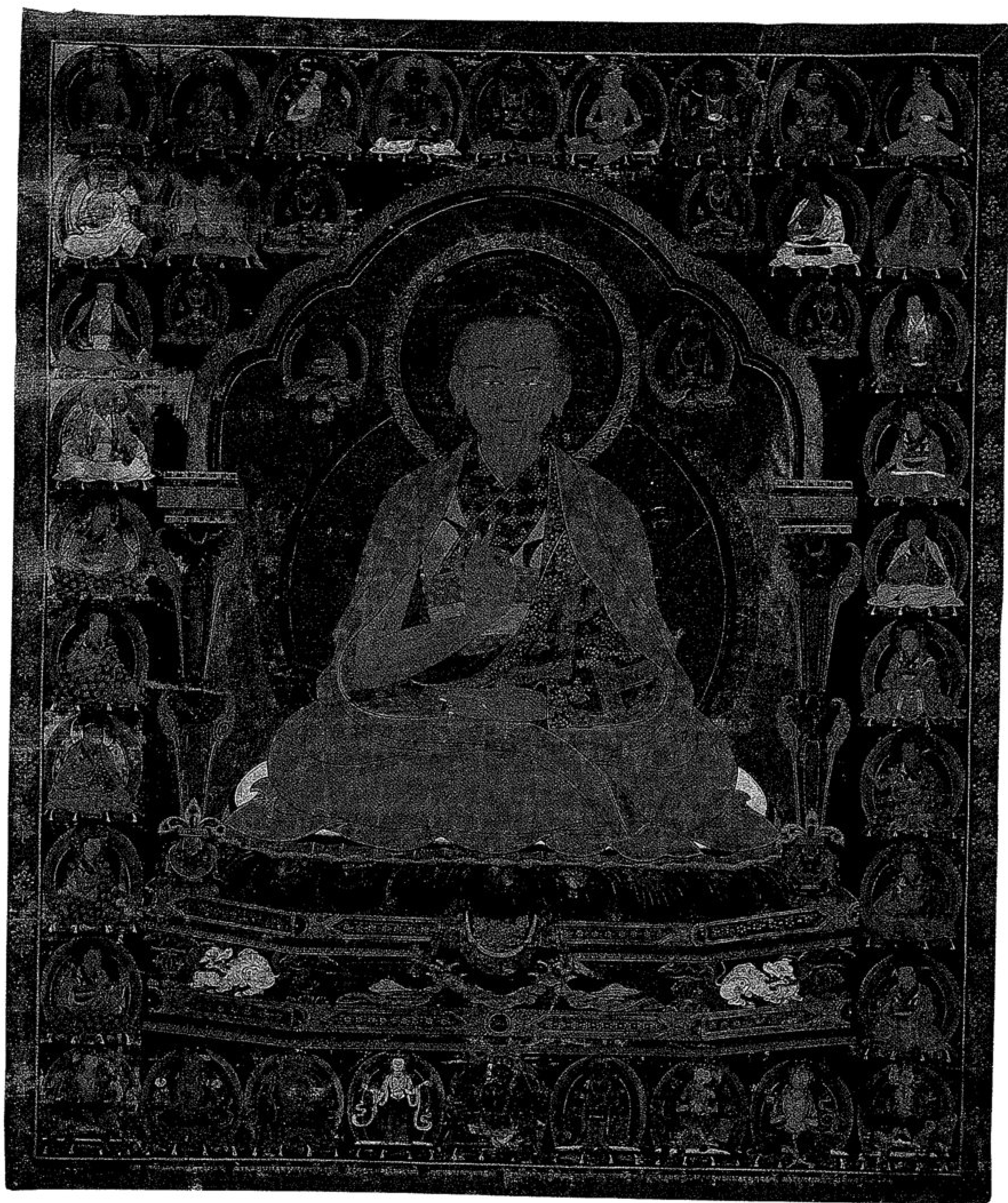
The eleven thangkas made in order to fulfill the wishes of the great adept Buddha-shrī, together with the completion of the series with paintings of more recent masters, are hung and displayed every other year at the time of the [Hevajra] Path Consecration, in alternation with the set of golden thangkas (*gser thang*) commissioned by dKon-mchog-dpal-ldan (1526–1590).[176] The continuation of the set of golden thangkas was commissioned by Byams-pa-kun-dga'-bkra-shis (1558–1603?).[177] It was forbidden to move these paintings from their place of keeping in the Lam-zab lha-khang at Ngor—infractions against this prohibition would be punished by the Dharmapālas![178]

And for Ngor-chen's third main teacher:

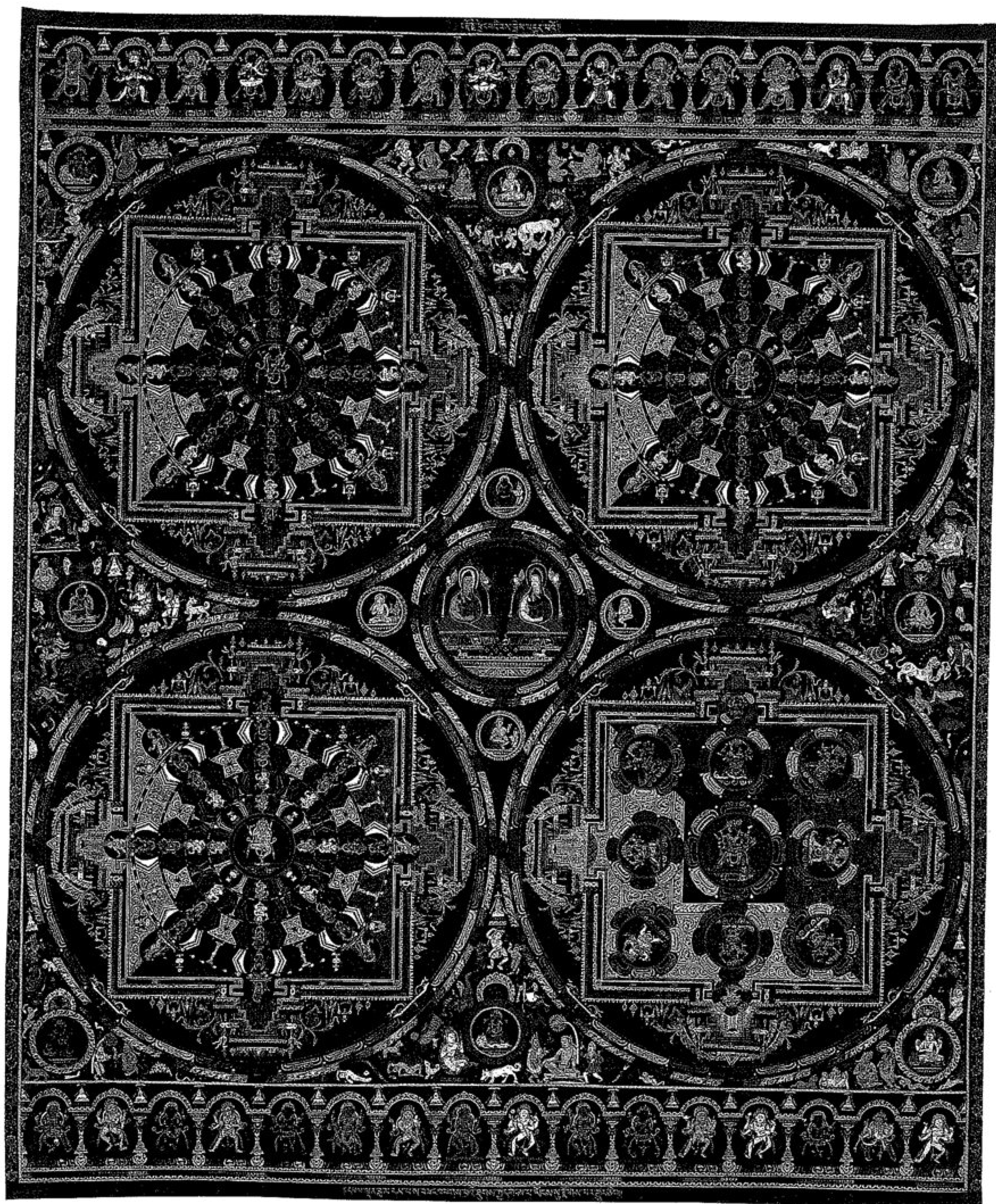
[3] To fulfill the wishes of his deceased teacher Sa-bzang 'Phags-pa gZhon-nu-blo-gros, he commissioned from Newar artists the painting of this complete set of maṇḍalas of the Vajrāvalī cycle, together with three additional maṇḍalas from the Kriyāsamuccaya collection.[179]

Sangs-rgyas-phun-tshogs goes on to mention that Ngor-chen commissioned the making of extremely many other scroll paintings depicting both maṇḍalas and pure realms, and in addition, numerous clay statues. He gives a description of the major murals Ngor-chen commissioned, presenting what amounts to a fairly detailed description of the twenty-eight mural sections (*logs ris zhing khams*) of the main assembly hall at Ngor.[180] All the above-mentioned paintings and sculptures at Ngor date to the twenty-seven year period 1429 to 1456, i.e. to between the foundation of Ngor and Ngor-chen's passing. Here one can see that Ngor-chen commissioned works in memory of his teachers even two or three decades after their passing.

Of the religious treasures of Ngor mentioned above, some have been brought out of Tibet. For instance, one of the eleven great paintings of the complete series of *Lam-'bras* lineage masters commissioned to fulfill the wishes of his deceased teacher Buddha-shrī (1339–1419)—or at least a painting patterned very closely after it—has found its way into a museum collection in North America. This painting is one of a set of eleven venerable thangkas that was also seen by Glo-bo mkhan-chen bSod-nams-lhun-grub (1456–1532) at Ngor in the late 1400s or early 1500s



Pl. 1. Na-bza' Brag-phug-pa bSod-nams-dpal (1277-1350), master of the Lam 'bras teachings. The main figure is surrounded by the teacher lineage of Cakrasamvara in the tradition of Lūyipa. One of a set depicting the masters of the Ngor-pa Lam-'bras lineage, the painting is stylistically a continuation of already archaic features into the 16th c. Thangka, gTsang (probably Ngor), late-16th-century, 78 x 66.5 cm. Essen collection. Published: G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), II 220 (I 75).



Pl. 2. Four maṇḍalas of the Vajrāvalī cycle. Seventh of a series of thangkas commissioned by Ngor-chen Kun-dga'-bzang-po and painted by Newar artists. Thangka, 1430s-40s, Ngor, 91.4 x 73.7 cm. J. Zimmerman collection. Published P. Pal (1991), pp. 150-152, plate no. 84; inscriptions p. 196.



Fig. 24. bSod-nams-rtse-mo and Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan surrounded by a Sa-skya-pa Lineage of Cakrasaṃvara. This painting was probably the work of Newar artists. Thangka, 15th c., gTsang (Ngor), 83.2 x 76.5 cm. Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (inv. no. 67.8731). Published: D. Jackson (1986); G. Béguin et al. eds. (1977), no. 121, pp. 129 and 140; and P. Pal and Hsien-ch'i Tseng (1969), Lamaist Art, [exhibition catalogue], no. 24, p. 45.

and described by him in his brief painting description (*bris yig*).[181] (See Fig. 24.)

In addition, paintings from the complete set of maṇḍalas of the Vajrāvalī cycle commissioned by Ngor-chen in memory of his deceased teacher Sa-bzang 'Phags-pa gZhon-nu-blo-gros are also known to be extant.[182] (See Pl. 2.) Sangs-rgyas-phun-tshogs was also a great admirer of this wonderful set of painted maṇḍalas, and he goes on to relate the remarkable circumstances under which the artists came from the Kathmandu Valley to paint them. Six Newar painters including Wang-gu-li and his brother are said to have come to the Ngor retreat without prior arrangement, showing up one day unannounced soon after Ngor-chen had decided to have a set of the *Vajrāvalī* painted. One of these Newar painters, A-khe ra-dza by name, later said that all of them without discussing the matter had suddenly decided to come to Tibet to the "son of lama 'Phags-pa" (i.e. to the presence of Ngor-chen, the great disciple of 'Phags-pa gZhon-nu-blo-gros). Along the way they were given plenty of good offers of other painting work at such places as La-stod Shel-dkar, Chu-'dus and Sa-skya, and they had even been told by one man that they would be paid in gold if they came with him and worked at En-tsha-kha (a famous Bon-po center in gTsang). But even so, none of them wanted to work at those places; they were drawn to the remote hermitage of Ngor as if summoned there by the power of the lama Kun-dga'-bzang-po's meditation.[183]

In the past three decades many more of the old Newar-style paintings of Ngor have somehow found their way out of Tibet to the West. For a while, all similar-looking Sa-skya-pa thangkas were called by the blanket name "Ngor style." It would be best, however, not to use this term indiscriminately, since similar paintings were also commissioned elsewhere in gTsang and Tibet.[184] Nevertheless, many of these paintings known in the West do contain inscriptions linking them to Ngor, either as works commissioned by lamas of Ngor or as embodying lineages and traditions with which the Ngor-pas were closely identified. Moreover, special variations of this style, including somewhat Tibetanized adaptations of it, continued to be employed at Ngor or at least under the patronage of the lamas of Ngor even as late as the second half of the 16th century.[185] (See Pl. 1.) There is thus some justification for classifying such later paintings as "Ngor-pa style."

The First Emergence of Tibetan Styles

Most scholars, Tibetan and Western alike, would now probably date the beginning of what could be considered truly Tibetan styles to somewhere in the middle decades of the 15th century. The consensus now would be to place this achievement in about the fifth decade of that century, which is slightly later than the pioneering opinions of Tucci in his *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (1949). Tucci maintained that before the period of the great stūpas of gTsang (here mainly meaning the Gyantse stūpa, which was painted for the most part in the 1430s), painting in Tibet had reflected a variety of foreign schools, but that it had not yet become an expression of a distinctively Tibetan sensibility.[186] Tucci also thought that he had detected the earliest achievement of Tibetan artistic maturity precisely in some of the murals of these great multiple-chapel stūpas of gTsang.[187] He perceived the style found in the best of such murals as a uniquely Tibetan blending of the previous (mainly Indian, which here means Nepalese, and Chinese) stylistic currents. Although the "Nepalese" elements continued to predominate as before, he believed the influences had now been successfully assimilated and transformed by the Tibetan artistic sensibility. "Thus," as Tucci wrote, "Tibetan art acquired an individuality of its own, and the artists, as if they vaguely sensed this, took an unusual course, never since so prevalent in Tibetan painting: they signed their works."[188]

There is no denying the importance of the early 1400s for Tibetan art, but here Tucci's judgment needs a slight adjustment. It would probably be more accurate to say that the style of the Gyantse murals of the 1430s "merely announces the birth" of a Tibetan national style, and that the Chinese and Newar influences had not yet been fully amalgamated.[189] The decisive step in that

direction would be taken by artists of the next generation. Some of the authoritative indigenous Tibetan writers on art similarly maintain that the earlier styles had not yet become a truly "Tibetan style" (*bod ris*) until the time of the great Tibetan painters such as mKhyen-brtse and sMan-bla-don grub, who as we now know flourished in the 1450s and 1460s.[190]

Names of Early Painters in gTsang

Tucci listed the names of the artists found in the inscriptions of the great stūpas of gTsang, and these also bear repeating here with some minor additions and comments. The first list is as follows:[191]

At "Iwang" (=g.Ye-dmar):

1. rGyal-mtshan-grags

In the main temple (*gtsug lag khang*) of Gyantse:

1. Gang-bzang
2. Rin-chen-grags of bZang-ri in sNye-mo
3. dPal-'byor [-rin-chen]

In the Gyantse "Kumbum" (dPal-'khor mchod-rten):

1. Kun-dga'-ba of rGya (in chapel I.3= 'Byung-po-'dul-byed lha-khang 1Sb) (1)
2. Shes-rab-dpal-bzang-po (pa), a monk of rGyal-khang in Nyug (I.4, II.5, II.6, III.12, III.13) who is probably the same as below, no. 5
3. Thar-pa-ba of Lha-rtse (I.5, I.6, II.16, III.20, IV.5, campana, lower cella, 11)
4. Sangs-rgyas-bzang-po, a monk (I.5= Zlog-byed-lha-khang 1Wa')
5. Shes-rab-dpal (I.8), perhaps the same as no. 2 above
6. Don-grub-bzang-po of Lha-rtse, the master of Don-ri (I.9, I.10= Nor-rgyun-ma'i lha-khang 1Na; I.14, III.10, III.14, III.15)
7. A monk of Lha-rtse (I.9)
8. bKra-shis-bzang-po (I.10= gZa'-yum lha-khang 1Na')
9. Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho of bZang-ldan (I.12= Nor-rgyun-ma'i lha-khang 1Na; II.10)
10. bKra-shis of Shag-tshal near Lha-rtse (rGyal-mtshan rtse-mo'i lha-khang 1Ea'), perhaps the same as the bKra-shis-bzang-po mentioned below, no. 29. (I.15), and above, no. 8 (I.10)
11. rGyal-mtshan-pa of gNas-rnying (I.20= rNam-rgyal-khang 1Sa')
12. Nam-mkha'-'od-zer of bDe-chen in Lha-rtse (II.1= 2Sa)
13. dGe-ba of bDe-chen in Lha-rtse (II.2, IV.6) [same as the following?]
14. Blo-gros-rab-gsal of dGe-ma of bDe-chen near Lha-rtse (II.3= 2Sb; IV.6) [cf. the preceding]
15. "dGe-bsnyen of Lha-rtse" [This is more of a title than a name. Could he be dGe-ba of bDe-chen?] (II.3, IV.12, cupola 1)
16. dKon-mchog-bzang-po of Jo-nang (II.4, III.7, cupola 1, campana, lower cella, 1, 6, 9, 10)
17. bSam-[g]tan-bzang-po of lCags-thang (II.4)
18. Ban-chen-skyabs-pa of bZang-ri in sNye-mo (II.7, III.9, 11)
19. Tsan-nes, bTsan-nes of gNas-rnying (II.9, II.11, II.12)
20. Bla-ma-mgon (II.11)
21. Nam-mkha'-dpal (II.12)
22. bTsan of g.Yag-sde in sNye-mo (II.13)
23. dPal-'byor-rin-chen of gNas-rnying, a monk (II.15= sMra-seng lha-khang 2Sb')
24. Rin-chen-dpal-'byor of gNas-rnying (IV.2= mKhyen-rab lha-khang 4S2)
25. dge-bshes bSod-nams-dpal-'byor-ba of gNas-rnying (II.15= sMra-seng lha-khang 2Sb'; dome 4= Nub-phyogs gzhal-yas-khang 5W)
26. dPal-chen of rDzong-shos in Lha-rtse (III.3)
27. Khro-rgyal-dbang-phyug of Khab-gsar in Lha-rtse (III.4)
28. Chos-skyong-bkra-shis of bShags-tshal [in Lha-rtse] (III.15)
29. bKra-shis-bzang-po of bShags-tshal in Lha-rtse (III.17), perhaps the same as nos. 8 and 10 above.
30. Legs-pa of bSa'-lung in Lha-rtse (III.19)
31. Lha'i-rgyal-mtshan, son of no. 23 (IV.1, dome 2)
32. Don-grub-skyabs of mKhar-kha (IV.2, 8, 10), elsewhere said to be of dPal-ldan-'khar-dga' (dome 3), campana, upper cella, 1, 2, 4, 5, 11)
33. dPal-'phel-ba of gNas-rnying (dome 2, campana, upper cella 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11)
34. Sangs-[rgyas-] rin-pa of 'Khar-dga' (campana, lower cella 5)

The second list (Tucci [1949], p. 207):

at sNar-thang:

1. dpon-btsun bKra-shis-bzang-po
2. dpon-btsun of dBus
3. Shes-rab-dpal
4. rGyal-po-dar of Gro-bo-lung
5. a pupil of dGe-'dun-rgyal
6. brTson-mchog-bdag [?] (The latter does not sound like a name.)

at gNas-gsar:

1. 'Bre Ngan [?]-bzangs

at Zhwa-lu:

1. mChims bSod-nams-'bum

direction would be taken by artists of the next generation. Some of the authoritative indigenous Tibetan writers on art similarly maintain that the earlier styles had not yet become a truly "Tibetan style" (*bod ris*) until the time of the great Tibetan painters such as mKhyen-brtse and sMan-bla-don grub, who as we now know flourished in the 1450s and 1460s.[190]

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12. Nam-mkha'-'od-zer of bDe-chen in Lha-rtse (II.1= 2Sa)
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14. Blo-gros-rab-gsal of dGe-ma of bDe-chen near Lha-rtse (II.3= 2Sb; IV.6) [cf. the preceding]
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25. dge-bshes bSod-nams-dpal-'byor-ba of gNas-rnying (II.15= sMra-seng lha-khang 2Sb'; dome 4= Nub-phyogs gzhal-yas-khang 5W)
26. dPal-chen of rDzong-shos in Lha-rtse (III.3)
27. Khro-rgyal-dbang-phyug of Khab-gsar in Lha-rtse (III.4)
28. Chos-skyong-bkra-shis of bShags-tshal [in Lha-rtse] (III.15)
29. bKra-shis-bzang-po of bShags-tshal in Lha-rtse (III.17), perhaps the same as nos. 8 and 10 above.
30. Legs-pa of bSa'-lung in Lha-rtse (III.19)
31. Lha'i-rgyal-mtshan, son of no. 23 (IV.1, dome 2)
32. Don-grub-skyabs of mKhar-kha (IV.2, 8, 10), elsewhere said to be of dPal-ldan-'khar-dga' (dome 3), campana, upper cella, 1, 2, 4, 5, 11)
33. dPal-'phel-ba of gNas-rnying (dome 2, campana, upper cella 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11)
34. Sangs-[rgyas-] rin-pa of 'Khar-dga' (campana, lower cella 5)

The second list (Tucci [1949], p. 207):

at sNar-thang:

1. dpon-btsun bKra-shis-bzang-po
2. dpon-btsun of dBus
3. Shes-rab-dpal
4. rGyal-po-dar of Gro-bo-lung
5. a pupil of dGe-'dun-rgyal
6. brTson-mchog-bdag [?] (The latter does not sound like a name.)

at gNas-gsar:

1. 'Bre Ngan [?]-bzangs

at Zhwa-lu:

1. mChims bSod-nams-'bum

at Jo-nang:
1. Seng-ge-bzang-po
2. Kun-dga'-bsod-nams

at Nor-bu'i-khyung-rtse:
1. dPon Grub

at sPos-khang:
1. dGe-legs-bshes-gnyen

As Tucci added, Shes-rab-dpal in the second list (who was active at sNar-thang) is the artist by that name from rGyal-khang in Nyug, who often appears in the inscriptions to the Gyantse murals, as does his colleague bKra-shis-bzang-po.[192]

Tibetan painters in later generations too—at least the greatest among them—were never quite as anonymous as Tucci implied. A few of their names were carefully recorded and remembered by tradition, and occasionally the artist himself indicated his identity through an inscription, just as Tibetan scribes of old sometimes did in scribal colophons to fine gold- and silver-lettered manuscripts.[193] But by and large Tucci was right: the average Tibetan artists of all periods did work mostly as anonymous craftsmen, leaving behind just the stylistic details of their work as their only signature.

Notes

[136] See for instance D. Klimburg-Salter (1982); R. Vitali (1990); M. Rhie and R. Thurman (1991), pp. 40-54; R. Vitali in V. Chan (1994), pp. 47-56 and 375-467; A. Chayet (1994), pp. 180-184; and J. Casey Singer (1994a). For art of a still earlier period, H. Karmay (1975), pp. 11-14, has documented an old painting from Tun-huang done in an almost completely Chinese style (Stein 32), dated 836 and signed by a Tibetan named dPal-dbyangs.

[137] R. A. Stein (1972), p. 281. Stein here refers to Karma-nges-don-bstan-rgyas, xylograph ed., ff. 169b and 172b; and dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-'phreng-ba, xylograph ed., vol. *na*, f. 38b. In the latter work (1985 ed.), see vol. 1, p. 811: *bris klog lha bris rang byung du mkhyen nas mkhan po'i dpon yig gi sdebs dang lha bris mdzad/.*

[138] See Shākya-mchog-ldan, *rNgog lo*, p. 453.5: *phya pa'i sku tshad dang mnyam pa'i bris sku chen po/ rje btsun nyid kyis phyag bris su mdzad pa/ de'i gshams na/ rdzas ldog ma 'dres so sor 'byed pa'i mig rtsa dmar po can/ zhes sogs kyi tshig ring po mdzad pa'i sku 'dra ngo mtshar can phul/.*

[139] This is recorded in Glo-bo mkhan-chen's biography by Kun-dga'-grol-mchog, *dPal ldan bla ma 'jam pa'i dbyangs*, MS, p. 64a.3, where his painting of the *Lam 'bras* lineage teachers on the covers of the pustaka is described in some detail: *yang de'i 'phros la e waṃ la bzhugs pa'i glegs bam gyi ya gleg ma gleg phyi nang gi ri mo kun kyang rje btsun nyid kyi phyag ris dngos yin/ de yang ya gleg la bdag med ma/ birwa pa/ nag po pa/ ḍa ma ru pa/ a wa dhu ti pa rnams yod pa'i bdag med ma la dbu skra....*

[140] G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 176, figs. 17 and 18. Tucci calls the mural "'Jam dbyangs 'od 'bar ba," but Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, *Guide to Central Tibet*, p. 444.4, and informants from Sa-skya affirm that the mural in the east part of the dBu-rtse bla-brang was called the *'Jam dbyangs gar gzigs ma*. The image was considered unusual because, as the *gar gzigs* in its name indicates, its eyes seemed to follow the viewer everywhere in the room. Kaḥ-thog Si-tu (p. 444.4) describes it as having been life-sized and in an old Newar manner: *shar du chos rje sa paṇ phyag bris 'jam dbyangs gar gzigs mi tshad bal bris rnying pa/.* The *'Jam dbyangs gzi 'od 'bar ba* was a statue in the same dBu-rtse chapel, facing the *Gar gzigs ma* and dating to the time of Sa-paṇ. See Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 173, who described it as "certainly the most remarkable work of art admired in Sa-skya today," and A. Ferrari (1958), p. 64 and n. 499. In the note, L. Petech suggests that the mural was perhaps "the same as the one described by G. Tucci in *Asiatica* VI (1940), p. 359." On the placement of the mural, see J. Schoening (1990), p. 32, no. (2) and map 8.

[141] These murals survived until at least the 1950s at Shangs Sreg-zhing, according to the Sa-skya geshe bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, personal communication. This Shangs or Zhang Sreg-zhing was one of the places where Sa-paṇ resided for a considerable period of time. See G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 680, n. 40; and A-mes-zhabs, *dPal rdo rje nag po*, vol. 1, p. 357.4. lCang-skya Rol-pa'i-rdo-rje, vol. 2, p. 913, records that the 7th Dalai Lama in 1754 (following the suggestion of the bSam-yas Chos-skyong) made offerings before many famous images of Mañjuśrī in Tibet, including this painting and also the Gar-gzigs-ma in Sa-skya.

[142] This picture, also called the *'Jam dbyangs phyag mtshan ri mo*, is a symbol of Mañjuśrī, but was designed in such a way to represent also some of the main early propagators of Buddhism in Tibet. See D. Jackson (1984), p. 42, which corrects my earlier mistake in Chogay Trichen (1979), ill. 11. Sa-paṇ painted the original on one

of the walls of the Samye complex even though at that time he lacked proper lighting, brushes and colors. Its name derives from the first line of the poetical inscription that he also composed. For the text, see Sa-skya Paṇḍita, *Phyag mtshan ri mo'i bstod tshig*, Sa skya bka' 'bum, vol. 5, p. 400.2.6. A brief commentary on this work by Ngag-dbang-legs-grub exists. See D. Jackson (1987), p. 218, n. 1.

Sa-paṇ is also said to have invented the original "Rebirth" game. See M. Tatz and J. Kent (1977), p. 6. He is also credited with the erection of one of the stūpas in the Jo-khang of Lhasa. See Dalai bla-ma V, *Lha ldan dkar chag*, p. 12. Bu-ston in his history of Buddhism records the existence of other murals at bSam-yas, namely some which depicted the ordination abbatial lineage. See J. Szerb (1990), p. 30, n. 7, who also refers to G. Tucci's discussion of this in *Minor Buddhist Texts* (reprint Delhi, 1986), p. 335.

[143] The biography of Sa-skya Paṇḍita in the *mKhas 'jug rnam bshad* of Glo-bo mkhan-chen bSod-nams-lhun-grub (p. 40.4) mentions two works by Sa-paṇ belonging to the *bzo rig* (arts and technologies) class: *sKu gzugs kyi bstan bcos* (Treatise on Bodily [Proportions]) and *Sa brtag pa* (Geomancy). See also D. Jackson (1987), p. 84.

[144] See 'Jig-rten-gsum-mgon, Collected Writings, vol. 1, pp. 123-179, for the text of this biography.

[145] Rin-chen-phun-tshogs, *sPyan snga 'bri gung gling pa'i rnam thar*, 7b.3: *de nas spu rangs kho char du bzhugs pa'i dus/ rnam thar phyogs bcu dus gsum ma'i lha bris thugs la 'khrungs pas gtsug lag khang gi gyang logs la skya bris su btab nas bzhag pa phyis 'bri gung du yang dar ro//.* Shes-rab-'byung-gnas made other paintings too; see *ibid.*, pp. 10a.4-7 and 13a.6-7. The "Dus gsum sangs rgyas ma" biographical paintings are also mentioned twice in Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 62.5-6, who saw them in 'Bri-gung, though the references are a little unclear. The present 'Bri-gung skyabs-mgon Che-tshang Rin-po-che paid much attention to the murals depicting this biography in the old assembly hall of Phiwang monastery in Ladakh, saying that they were similar to the ancient original paintings. (Mr. Ngawang Tsering of Nurla, Ladakh, oral communication, Hamburg, 1994.)

[146] 'Jig-rten-gsum-mgon, Collected Writings, vol. 4, p. 44 (*nga* 22b.6): *dpon chen po tshul rin gyis bdag mdzad/.* And on the Newar artist: *lho bal gyi lha bzo rig pa'i yon tan phul du phyin pa/ bzo'i sprul par grags pa/ dpon chen po ma ṇi bha dra zhes bya ba spyan drangs nas/.* One can see that here the title *dpon chen po* was given to both great artists (later the form was sometimes *dpon mo che*). The author goes on to mention (p. 12) even smiths and metal-working, and at one point he respectfully addresses contemporaneous master artists (*dpon lha bzo rnams la zhu*).

[147] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, pp. 285.2 (143a).

[148] The pilgrim Kaḥ-thog Si-tu usually seems to have used the terms *bal bris rnying pa* or *sngon gyi bal bris* for particularly archaic-looking paintings, such as at Grwa-thang, bSam-yas and Lho sMra-'o-cog. See for instance his pilgrimage guide, pp. 170.6, 206.6, 208.4, 290.2 and 294.5. But compare p. 394.4 where he refers to such a style at the considerably later (15th-c.) site of Gyantse.

[149] See 'Gyur-med-tshe-dbang-mchog-grub, *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum dkar chag*, p. 151: *bal ris kyi thang ka thog tshad ma brgya dang brgyad bzhengs.* The same lama 'Gro-mgon is recorded (p. 156) to have commissioned as a memorial to his late father three life-sized statues in Nepal, which he then transported to Tibet and for which the Kashmiri paṇḍita Śākyaśrībhadra (1140s–1225) performed the vivification (*rab gnas*) rites. The Tibetan: *nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer gyi sras 'gro mgon gyis yab kyi dgongs rdzogs la sku rten rigs gsum sems dpa' mi tshad dang mnyam pa nai pa la'i yul du bskrun nas spyan drangs/ gdung rten mdo mangs dang rgyud 'bum gser bris ma thugs rten sku 'bum mthong grol chen mo bzhengs/ rab gnas kha che paṇ chen shakya shri* [sic] *gdan drangs/.* I am indebted to Mr. Jampa Samten for these references. Such commissioning of religious objects, especially statues, in Nepal and bringing them (often in large numbers) to Tibet continued throughout much of the history of Tibet. The 7th Dalai Lama, for instance, is recorded to have done this even as late as the 1750s. See lCang-skya Rol-pa'i-rdo-rje, vol. 2, pp. 917f. and 920. See further A. Macdonald and A. Vergati Stahl (1979) and E. Lo Bue (1988).

[150] For this critical discussion of sacred art by 'Jig-rten-gsum-mgon, see his Collected Writings, vol. 2, pp. 10.5–13.4. It is interesting to see him criticizing those learned scholars (*mkhas pa*) who follow the proportional system set forth in the canonical source *Zha ri bus zhus pa'i mdo.* He refers further (p. 14.5) to Atiśa's having invited a great eastern Indian artist, who created and destroyed twelve trial attempts before finally being satisfied with the thirteenth.

[151] rGod-tshang ras-pa, pp. 195.3-197.5 (97a-98a).

[152] Chos-rje Blo-gros-rgyal-mtshan was a noble monk of the Mustang ruling family, elder brother of the ruler Grags-pa-mtha'-yas and nephew of Glo-bo mkhan-chen bSod-nams-lhun-grub (1456–1532). For more on him, see D. Jackson (1984), pp. 126f.

[153] The meaning of the term *bcu tshigs* is unclear to me; three possibilities that occur to me are that it might have been an observance to mark every tenth day, or the tenth day of the month, or the completion of one tenth of the project. But it also occurs many times in the colophon of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen, *sKyes bu gsum*, where this is also clearly something (a ceremony or offering) sponsored by numerous patrons of the block carving. See pp. 597ff. (299a-), beginning with the dpon-mo-che-ba bSod-nams-rnam-rgyal, the biggest patron, who offered two.

[154] This "bla-ma Glo-bo-pa" may have been the Lo

Mustang lama 'Jam-dbyangs-rin-chen-rgyal-mtshan (b. 1446) of Glo-bo Ge-gar, who was the father of mNga'-ris paṇ-chen Padma-dbang-rgyal and Legs-ldan-bdud-'joms-rdo-rje. The biographies of all three masters appear in Khetsun Sangpo ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism*, vol. 3, pp. 598ff., based on the *'Dus pa mdo dbang bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* (f. 137a-).

[155] The minister Tshe-dbang-bzang-po was a very important figure in Glo-bo at this time. A few years later in his mid-fifties he would father Kun-dga'-grol-mchog (1507–1566/67), a noble monk who went on to become an illustrious lama in dBus and gTsang provinces in central Tibet and to serve as the head of the great Jo-nang monastery.

[156] The work is listed by A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho, p. 584, MHTL no. 13064.

[157] See G. Roerich, transl. (1949), vol. 1, pp. 198f. (Tib. *ga* 43b).

[158] For a good description of what is now known to survive, see R. Vitali (1990).

[159] Tucci (1932-41), vol. 4-3, p. 137, mentions two names of artists at g.Ye-dmar: Phug rGyal-mtshan-grags and Phas [?] 'Jam-dpal. The former painted in an Indian style (*rgya gar lugs*), while the other evidently worked in a manner not in accord with the Li- [i.e. Central Asian-] style (*'bri ba li lugs mi mthun*). See also R. Vitali (1990), p. 65, n. 93.

[160] G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, pp. 201 and 277, referring to the temples at gNas-gsar and g.Ye-dmar ("Iwang"); Tucci (1932-41), *Indo-Tibetica* (on Iwang), vol. 4, part 1, pp. 133-140, and vol. 4, part 3, figs. 39-54. On g.Ye-dmar or "Iwang," see now R. Vitali (1990), pp. 39ff.

[161] H. Karmay (1975), p. 60.

[162] R. Vitali (1990), p. 107.

[163] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 185.2 (93a): *gong ma hor gyi dus su gnas brtan rgya lugs bal bris rgya bris 'dres ma lta bu nyer gcig.* See also the same pilgrim's mention of a set of Newar-style paintings of an Elder or Elders at dPal gyi Ri-bo-che in Khams: p. 38.1 (16b): *bal bris kyi gnas brtan/.*

[164] E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), p. 48.

[165] G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 177. His comments are now superseded by the study of R. Vitali (1990), pp. 89-122. In this connection see especially pp. 107f.

[166] On the life of this master, see D. Seyfort Ruegg (1966).

[167] See Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 348. Bu-ston's treatise is also mentioned by W. D. Shakabpa (1976) (Zhwa-sgab-pa dBang-phyug-bde-ldan), vol. 1, p. 109. Also mentioned by Shakabpa are the somewhat later iconometric treatises of sTag-tshang lo-tsā-ba Shes-rab-rin-chen (b. 1405) (i.e. his famous *rTen gsum bzhengs tshul dPal 'byor rgya mtsho*, which survives for instance at Ōtani University, Kyoto, no. 13701; in the Mi-rigs-dpe-mdzod-khang in Beijing, cat. no. 005069 (68); and the National Archives, Kathmandu) and Brag-nag-pa. The latter authority is not well known to me, but A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho refers to the work of "Chos-rje Brag-nag-pa" as one among many other treatises on religious art and painting (this enumeration including most of the well-known treatises of this type). See A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho, Collected Works, vol. 1, p. 108.

[168] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 406.2 (203b): *yang bu ston rin po che'i phyag bzos 'bag de'ang gzhi ka rtse'i dam 'byar/.*

[169] Cf. R. Vitali (1990), p. 122, n. 224; and D. Seyfort Ruegg (1966), p. 17. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 177, states more correctly that the maṇḍalas were painted according to the instructions of Bu-ston.

[170] These references derive from two written works of Bu-ston. See his *Zha lu'i gtsug lag khang gi gzhal yas khang nub ma byang ma shar ma lho ma rnams bzhugs pa'i dkyil 'khor sogs kyi dkar chag*, Collected Works, vol. 17 (*tsa*), pp. 1-18 (1a-9b), and *Byang ma yin/ ngan song sbyong ba'i dkyil 'khor gyi dkar chag*, vol. 17, pp. 18-47 (9b-24a). In the first work, p. 4.3 (2b), it is stated that such is the plan of maṇḍalas excellently painted by numerous divinely emanated artists: *bde bar gshegs pa'i dkyil 'khor rnams// sprul pa'i lha bzo mkhas pa du ma yis// legs par bris pa'i bkod pa 'di ltar lags//.* Actually directing the painting work of the artists was the religious teacher bSod-nams-rgyal-mtshan, who was following Bu-ston's plan (p. 16.7; 8b): *bkod pa bzhin du lha bzo mkhas pa yis// ri mor 'god par byed pa'i zhal ta ba// dge ba'i bshes gnyen bsod nams rgyal mtshan gyis// legs par bgyis nas dag par bsgrubs pa yin//.* Could the bSod-nams-rgyal-mtshan mentioned here have been the famous Bla-ma-dam-pa bSod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1312–1375), whose mother was from the Zhwa-lu sku-zhang family (he was in fact born there) and who was both a student and teacher of Bu-ston? In the second work there is mentioned again the same religious teacher bSod-nams-rgyal-mtshan as the overseer (*zhal ta ba*) who ensured that Bu-ston's plan was carried out correctly by the master artists (p. 33.5; 17a): *dge slong rin chen grub gyis bkod// bkod pa bzhin du lha bzo ba// mkhas pas 'bri ba'i zhal ta ba// dge bshes bsod nams rgyal mtshan gyis// bgyis nas legs par bsgrub pa yin//.* And still later (p. 46; 23b) both bSod-nams-rgyal-mtshan and gZhon-nu-bsod-nams are mentioned as overseers of the painting work. gZhon-nu-bsod-nams is no doubt Khyung-po-lhas-pa gZhon-nu-bsod-nams, a disciple of Bu-ston famed for his expertise in the three lower classes of tantra (on him see Zhwa-lu Ri-sbug sprul-sku Blo-gsal-bstan-skyong, pp. 77-78). These works were mentioned by D. Seyfort Ruegg (1966), p. 17, n. 3. On such activities of Bu-ston, see further Lo Bue (1990), p. 182.

[171] Zhwa-lu Ri-sbug sprul-sku Blo-gsal-bstan-skyong, pp. 66-67 (33b-34a).

[172] R. Vitali (1990), pp. 108f. and 111f. See also plates 66-68. His name appeared already in the list of Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 207.

[173] R. Vitali (1990), pp. 108 and 112. The key link to the imperial court is the mention in the *Myang chos 'byung* of skilled artisans (*bzo bo*) being summoned from *shar rgya hor*. See *ibid.*, p. 105. Bu-ston's biography, f. 14a.7, similarly mentions *shar rgya'i yul nas bzo bo mkhas pa bos/* (see also D. Seyfort Ruegg [1956], p. 17, n. 4). The biography further states (f. 14b.1) that within the gSer-khang there were an inconceivable number of images of Tathāgatas shining with one hundred and one colors: *nang na tshon sna rgya rtsa gcig gis bkra ba'i de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku gzugs bsam gyis mi khyab pa dang/.*

[174] Sangs-rgyas-phun-tshogs, p. 254.1 (60b): *de yang chos rje ye shes rgyal mtshan pa'i thugs dgongs rdzogs pa'i thabs su 'du khang gi gtsang khang 'og ma r/ ston pa'i gser sku chen po ngo mtshar ba 'gan rdo la dang bcas pa dang/.*

[175] *Ibid.*, p. 254.2 (60b): *grub chen buddha ba'i thugs dgongs rdzogs pa'i thabs su/ gsung ngag gi bla ma brgyud pa'i yongs su rdzogs pa'i bris sku chen mo bcu gcig dang/ gzhan yang gtsang khang steng ma da lta lam 'bras lha khang du grags par/ rdo rje 'chang gi gser sku khyad par du 'phags pa dang/ bdag me ma nas grub chen buddha ba'i bar lder sku khyad par du 'phags pa che ba rnams dang/ rdo rje 'chang nas grub chen buddha ba'i bar du brgyud pa yongs su rdzogs pa'i lder sku chung ba rnams lam zab lha khang du bzhugs pa dang/ bla ma rnams bzhugs pa'i gtsang khang gi logs bris la/ kye rdo rje dang/ 'khor lo bde mchog dang/ gsang ba 'dus pa rnams kyi bla ma brgyud pa dang/ sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' dpag tu med pa bzhengs/.*

[176] dKon-mchog-dpal-ldan was the 12th abbot of Ngor. His two tenures were from 1569 to 1579 and from 1583 to 1590. He may well have been the "dge-slong dPal-ldan" who commissioned the painting of Brang-ti paṇ-chen Nam-mkha'-dpal-bzang (1535–1602, 13th abbot of Ngor) described in Essen and Thingo (1989), vol. 2, no. II 229. The artist who painted this thangka was named bSam-grub-phun-tshogs.

[177] Shar-pa Byams-pa-kun-dga'-bkra-shis was the 14th abbot of Ngor. His tenure was from 1595 to ca. 1603. A continuation of the colored set seems to have been commissioned by Brang-ti Paṇ-chen Nam-mkha'-dpal-bzang; see G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 2, p. 105, no. II-228 dKon-mchog-lhun-grub.

[178] Sangs-rgyas-phun-tshogs, p. 255.1 (61a): *grub chen buddha ba'i thugs dgongs rdzogs thabs lam 'bras thang ka bcu gcig/ bla ma phyi ma'i kha skong dang bcas/ gsung ngag gi lam dbang skabs su/ rje dkon mchog dpal ldan pas bzhengs pa'i gser thang rnams dang res mos su 'grems pa 'di yin/ gser thang 'phros rnams byams pa kun dga' bkra shis kyi bzhengs par 'dug/ bzhugs sa sngar gyi gzim chung ka gnyis ma da lta lam zab lha khang du grags par bzhugs/ 'di las gzhan du 'khyer bcom byed na rdo rje chos skyong rnams kyis tshar gcod kyi las mdzad par 'gyur ro/.*

[179] *Ibid.*, p. 254.5 (60b): *chos rje 'phags pa gzhon nu blo gros pa'i thugs dgongs rdzogs pa'i thabs su/ bal po'i lha bzo mkhas pa rnams kyis bris pa'i rdo rje phreng ba'i dkyil 'khor yongs su rdzogs pa/ kri ya sa* [61a] *mu tstsha nas bshad pa'i dge legs su byed pa'i dkyil 'khor gsum dang bcas pa 'di dang/.*

[180] *Ibid.*, p. 255.4-257.2 (61a-62a).

[181] For more about this thangka and its description, see D. Jackson (1986). Glo-bo mkhan-chen's work is the *Lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa'i bla ma brgyud pa dang bcas pa rnams kyi bris yig.*

[182] See for example Rhie and Thurman (1991), p. 227, no. 73, where the inscription clearly mentions the dge-slong Kun-dga'-bzang-po as the patron of the painting, with the dedicatory prayer: "*dpal ldan bla ma dam pa sa bzang 'phags pa'i thugs kyi dgongs pa yongs su rdzogs par gyur cig!*" See further D. Jackson (1993), p. 122, where however the historical reference (note 7) should have been to the Kriyāsamuccaya (which Sa-bzang 'Phags-pa also transmitted to Ngor-chen) and not to the Vajrāvalī.
A second maṇḍala from this set (see above, Pl. 2, also from the Zimmerman collection) appears in P. Pal (1991), p. 151, plate no. 84, "Four maṇḍalas." The bottom inscription reads: *dpal ldan bla ma dam pa sa bzang 'phags pa'i thugs kyi dgongs pa yongs su rdzogs par gyur cig//.* Here the painting is dated to the "late 14th c." but probably the 1430s or 1440s are correct. An inscription on top identifies this as the seventh thangka in the series: *rdo rje phreng ba'i ras bris bdun pa'o//.* Cf. P. Pal (1984), p. 210, n. 5. For another painting from this set, see G. Béguin (1990), p. 71, n. 32.

[183] Sangs-rgyas-phun-tshogs, p. 258.6 (62b): *e waṃ chos ldan gyi ri khrod du phebs pa'i tshe/ rdo rje phreng ba'i dkyil 'khor yongs su rdzogs par bzhengs par dgongs pa na/ bal po'i lha bzo ba wang gu li dpun* [63a] *la sogs pa mkhas pa drug yong ba'i gtam yang med par blo bur du sku mdun du sleb nas ji ltar dgongs pa'i dkyil 'khor rnams dang/ gzhan yang thugs dam gyi rigs mtha' yas pa 'bad med du grub pa'i tshe/ lha bzo ba a kher ra dza bya ba cig yod pa na re/ nged 'di rnams phan tshun gcig gis gcig gleng ba ma yin par/ thams cad bod du bla ma 'phags pa'i bu can du 'gro zhes phyogs gcig tu gros 'chams te bod du yong ba'i tshe/ la stod shel dkar dang/ chu 'dus dang/ sa skya rnams su khyed rang rnams 'di tsho ru las dka'* [=ka] *byas na yon rdzongs legs po ster zer yang/ nge[d] tsho gang du 'ang sdod ma 'dod cing/ gnas po mi nyag gcig yod pa na re/ khyed rang an tsha khar phyin nas las dka'* [=ka] *byas na yon rdzongs thams cad gser du yod pas 'gro na ngas skyel zer yang 'gro ma 'dod par/ bla ma'i drung du zangs sleb pa 'di/ bla mas sgom byas pa nged kyi snying la phog pa yin mod zer te chos skyong gis rang dbang med par bkug pa yin no/.* For the mention of similarly remarkable happenings at the completion of the Lam-'bras lineage statues, see *ibid.*, p. 261 (64a).

[184] See also P. Pal (1984), p. 66.

[185] For example the famous series of *Lam 'bras* masters commissioned in the mid-16th century including the bSod-nams-rtse-mo in Los Angeles and others in Leiden

(Pal 1983, p. 153). (See Pl. 1.) Compare also the large thangka from Ngor now in Newark which was commissioned sometime during or after the tenure of its subject, the 20th abbot rGyal-rtse-ba Byang-pa Ngag-dbang-bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1598?–1674?; tenure ca. 1657). See V. Reynolds *et al.* (1986), p. 154f., no. P12. By the late 16th century a more typical gTsang-pa sMan-ris style was also being patronized by lamas of the Ngor-pa tradition, as is shown by the Vajrabhairava thangka in collection R.R.E. (Pl. 27). See also the stylistically similar portrait of Brang-ti Paṇ-chen Nam-mkha'-dpal-bzang (1535–1602) commissioned by the monk dPal-ldan and painted by the artist bSam-grub-phun-tshogs in G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 2, p. 106, no. II-229. Special features of this style include its use of gold to outline clouds, haloes and rocks.

[186] G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, pp. 206-7.

[187] *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 206-7. See also R. Vitali in V. Chan (1994), p. 418, who describes a still earlier Gyantse style by 1390-97 in the Gyantse Castle as "an early local style—feasibly executed by Tibetan artists—... fully developed in Tsang."

[188] G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 280.

[189] E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), pp. 27 and 32.

[190] Kong-sprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, part 1, p. 36. The 13th Karma-pa bDud-'dul-rdo-rje likewise did not consider a Tibetan manner (*bod ris*) to have begun until then. See E. Gene Smith (1970), p. 43, n. 73.

[191] G. Tucci (1932-41), vol. 4, pt. 1, p. 19. See also the English translation (New Delhi: 1989), pp. 18-20.

[192] Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 207.

[193] Indeed, Tucci himself stated (G. Tucci, 1949, p. 208): "But some painters seem to have been remarked above others or to have gained the admiration of their contemporaries, since history has preserved their memories." He also referred later (p. 293) to the mention of famous artists by Sum-pa mkhan-po and Klong-rdol bla-ma. See also V. Chan (1994), p. 864.

Chapter 2

The Master Painter Bye'u and Two Important Figures in Early 15th-century gTsang

According to a recent Tibetan historian, one of the early outstanding Tibetan painters was also somehow linked with one of the multiple-temple stūpas built in gTsang during the 15th century. He was the painter called Bye'u (or Byi'u) from Yar-stod, who, if this account can be trusted, was thus one of the first painters to be mentioned in historical accounts purely for his own attainments as a professional artist, and not because of his fame otherwise as a Buddhist master or as an artist patronized by some Buddhist master.[194]

Traditional Accounts about Bye'u

Not much is definitely known about Bye'u or his works, but he seems to have been a professional artist born in southern Central Tibet who flourished in gTsang in about the second quarter of the 15th century and whose style was an individual refinement of the previous largely Newar-influenced manners. The earliest known source on him is sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho's *Bai ḍū rya g.ya' sel*, a work completed in 1688.[195] According to the sDe-srid, Bye'u was born in Yar-stod (in southern Yar-klung within dBus Lho-kha, about twenty-five kilometers southeast of rTse-thang), and he received the name of Bye'u or Byi'u ("Little Bird") because of his habit of roaming far and wide in search of fine examples of art. The sDe-srid refers to him as "sprul-sku Bye'u."[196] The title "sprul-sku" here is merely a respectful term for him as a highly accomplished artist and does not identify him as a "reincarnate lama." Although this epithet originally implied that the painter or sculptor was the emanation of some divine being (much like the term *sprul pa'i bzo bo,* which denoted "divinely emanated artisans" who were believed to have made many of the earliest Indian and Tibetan Buddhist sacred images), it came to be applied widely in the 15th through 17th centuries to any artist of outstanding ability and reputation.

From the sDe-srid's account, little can be gleaned about the painting style of Bye'u except that he probably incorporated many diverging influences in his work. Nothing is said there about when he lived and painted. More concrete details are found only in one much later source: the art history section of W. D. Shakabpa's political history of Tibet in its full Tibetan version.[197] Shakabpa asserted that old paintings attributed to the artist Byi'u-sgang-pa (here the name derives from a place name, Byi'u-sgang[198]) survived in western gTsang in such places as Sa-skya, Shel-dkar, Byang Ngam-ring, and also at rDzong-kha (=rDzong-dkar) in Gung-thang. Some of the main figures portrayed in these thangkas are said to have included Atiśa and his main disciple 'Brom-ston, Sa-skya Paṇḍita, Amitāyus, Sarvavid Vairocana, mGon-po Ber, Zhal, and Lha-mo (=dPal-ldan-lha-mo).[199] Shakabpa did not cite any written sources for these statements, but it seems he actually saw (*mjal*) in gTsang such thangkas painted in an old style attributed to Byi'u-sgang-pa.[200]

Shakabpa informs us—again without indicating his source—that Byi'u-sgang-pa was the reputed creator of the large appliqué thangka (*gos sku*) of Avalokiteśvara displayed at the Gyantse dPal-'khor-chos-sde during the Sa-ga zla-ba (fourth lunar month) holiday.[201] The making of several other such great images in this period is also described in the sources, but without any mention so far traced of a sprul-sku Byi'u-sgang-pa.[202] The famous artist of gNas-rnying, dPal-'byor-rin-chen, for instance, is recorded to have directed in 1418 a group of thirty-seven artisans in the making of such a great image which had the Buddha Śākyamuni as its main figure.[203] If the information given by Shakabpa is correct, Bye'u the painter probably flourished at Gyantse in about the first half of the 15th century, the time of greatest artistic activity there.[204]

What may be even more significant is Shakabpa's further assertion that Bye'u painted one of the murals in the great stūpa or "Kumbum" of the dPal-'khor monastic complex at Gyantse,[205] the wall paintings of which were probably painted between about 1427 and 1440 under the patronage of the great prince Rab-brtan-kun-bzang-'phags (1389–1442).[206] In particular, Bye'u is reputed to have executed the painting of (the bodhisattva) Samantabhadra (Kun-tu-bzang-po) and retinue in a predominantly Newar style.[207] This mural is evidently the one found to the left of the door (i.e. on the northern wall) in chapel six (Rin-'byung lha-khang, the main western temple, devoted to Ratnasambhava) on the third level of the stūpa (3W), and it has been described and illustrated by Tucci in his *Indo-Tibetica*.[208] This chapel impressed Tucci as one of the most beautiful in the whole stūpa "for the magnificence of its paintings and the richness of its decoration," surely a strong attestation to its excellence, since Tucci also considered the murals in this structure to represent together one of the high points in the development of Tibetan painting. The inscriptions in this particular chapel do not, however, contain the names of the artist or artists responsible for these masterpieces of religious art.[209]

As mentioned above, Shakabpa described the paintings of Byi'u-sgang-pa as being for the most part similar to the "Newar style" (*bal ris*), but he



Fig. 25. The Gyantse monastic compound in about 1935. Photograph by F. Williamson. After Stephen Batchelor, The Tibet Guide (London, Wisdom Publications, 1987), p. 280.



Fig. 26. The Great Stūpa of Gyantse. Photograph C. Suyddam Cutting, 1935. The Newark Museum Tibetan Archives.

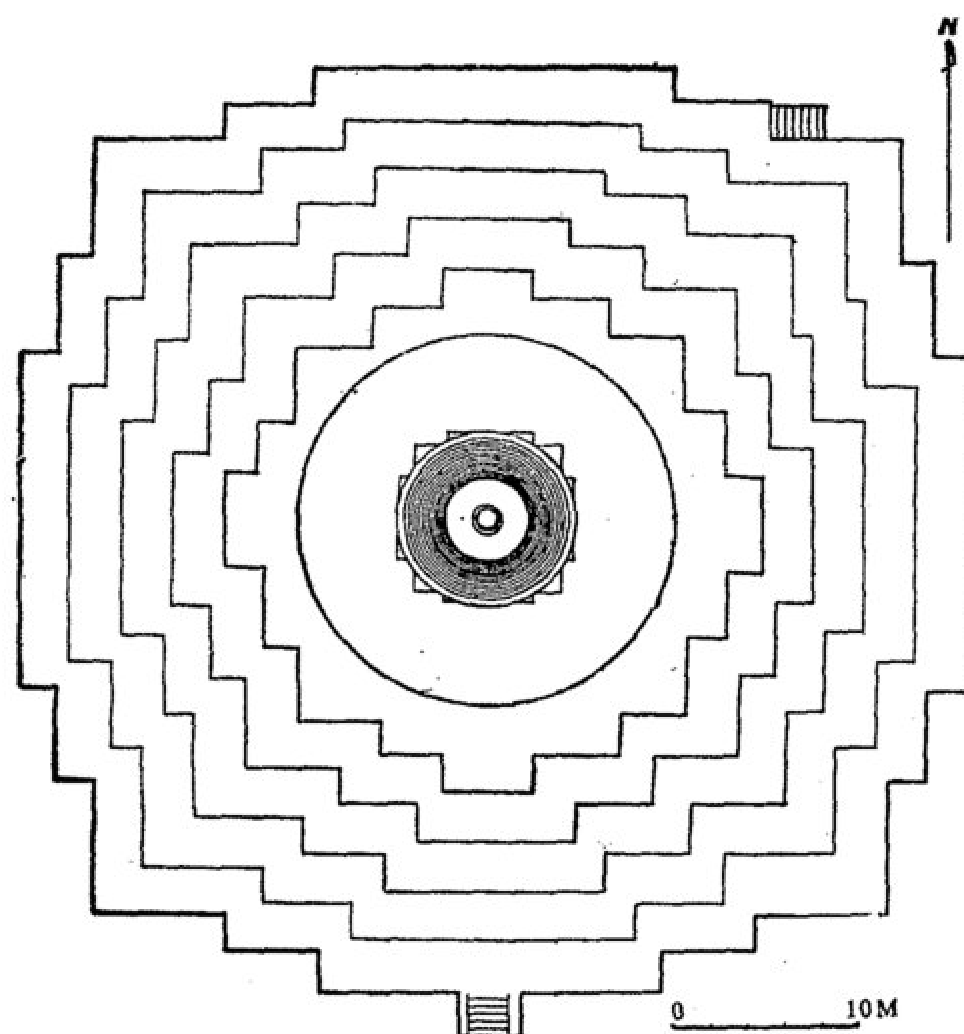


Fig. 27. The dPal-'khor mchod-rten at Gyantse, top-view. After Southern Ethnology and Archeology, vol. 4 (1991), p. 237.

0 1 5 10 m

Fig. 28. The dPal-'khor mchod-rten at Gyantse, south elevation and axial section. From F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), f. 2.



Fig. 29. The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. Mural in chapel six on the third level (i.e. chapel 3W) of the dPal-'khor mchod-rten in Gyantse. After Tucci, Indo-Tibetica, vol. 4, part 3, illustration 288.

also went on to mention the following typical features:[210]

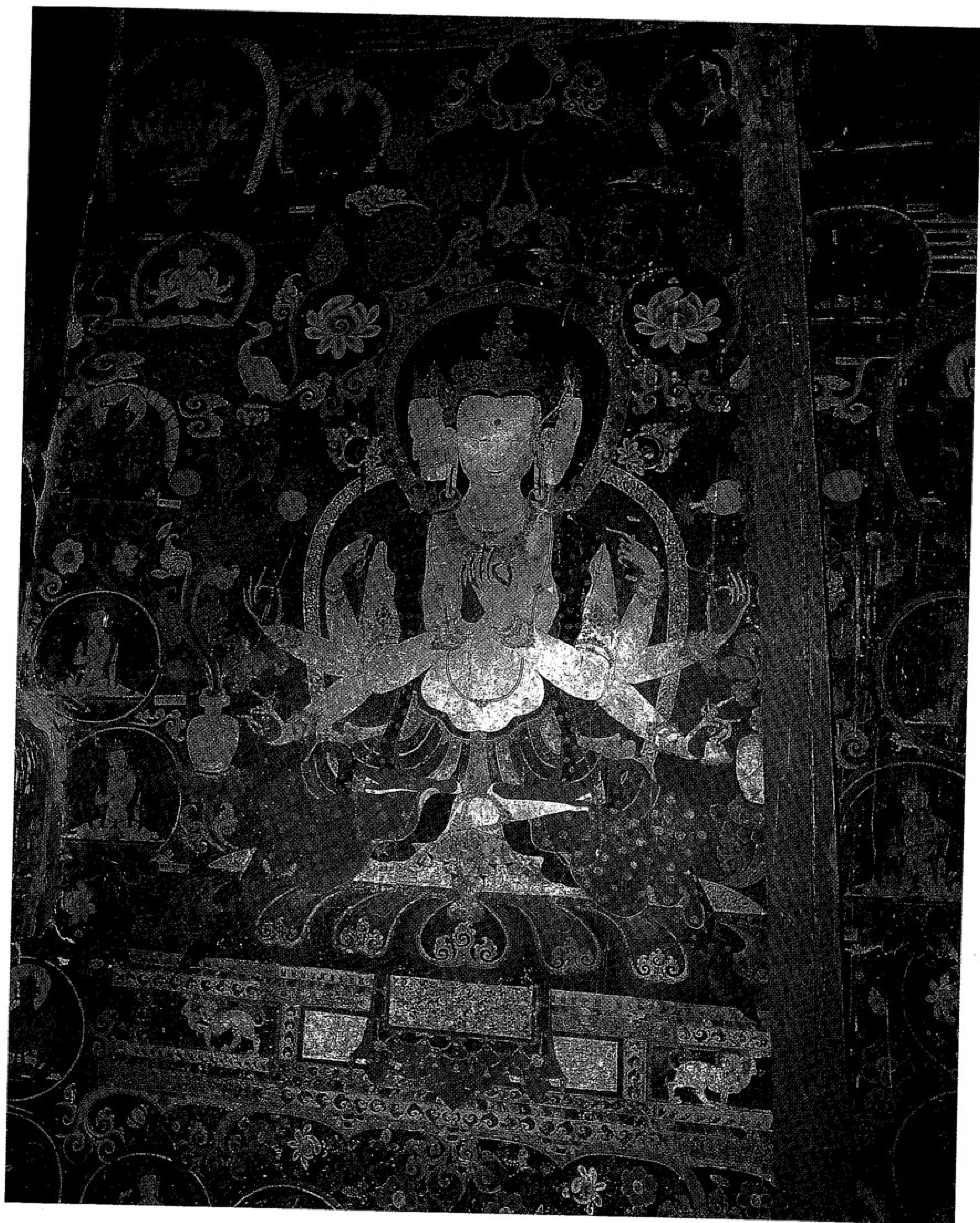
[In them] the central divinity was large, and the lesser deities (*lha mgron*) were [depicted] within small squares (*re mig* = *re'u mig*) or arched doorways (*sgo khyim*). The orange color of minium predominated, and gold outlining (*gser ris*) was very detailed on robes, etc. Wrathful figures were short, with large heads and bellies. When the figures were dark blue, the outlining (*dpyad* = *bcad*) was executed using white or light blue (*sngo sangs*). The six bone ornaments [of tantric figures] received a particularly detailed portrayal.

Shakabpa seems to have based this description also on past impressions of the old thangkas, and not just on the Gyantse mural of Kun-tu-bzang-po. It is clear that what is described here is a heavily Newar-influenced style, and indeed Shakabpa goes on to characterize Byi'u-sgang-pa's style once again as like a Newar style (*bal bris*).[211]

By contrast, the sole description of Bye'u's style by an earlier authority, that of De'u-dmar dge-bshes (early 1700s?), gives a different impression, especially regarding the overall color scheme:[212]

The spaces occupied by divine forms and nimbuses are round, and the bodies are fat. Their limbs have a slightly relaxed feeling. The colors, etc., are like the [Karma] Encampment tradition, except that robes and fluttering scarves are not shaded. This is the style of sprul-sku Byi'u. (X 38)

The painting style of sprul-sku Bye'u, although appreciated and remembered by a few connoisseurs in later generations, did not greatly influence the main stylistic trends of the following centuries. The sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho in 1688 did mention it as one of the styles that had flourished down to his time.[213] But there is also good reason to think that by the mid 17th century the Bye'u style had become something of an archaic curiosity, at least for the leading artists in central Tibet. The autobiography of the 5th Dalai Lama (1617–1682) relates that once in 1648 when commissioning a mural for the Kanjur temple of the Potala White Palace, that Dalai Lama chose a picture of the *Lam rim* lineage by Bye'u as a model for the artists to follow. The outstanding artists (*sprul sku ba rnams*), however, were unused to painting in such a style, and as a result the pictures they created seemed to belong to a new manner which was neither the Bye'u style nor their own 17th-century style.[214]



Pl. 3. Dharmadhātuvagiśvara. Mural in chapel six on the third level (i.e. chapel 3W) of the dPal-'khor mchod-rten in Gyantse, 1425. Photograph courtesy of Prof. F. Ricca. Published: F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), plate 10.

Bo-dong Paṇ-chen and the Lord of La-stod Byang

Shakabpa gives one last hint about Bye'u and his style. He mentions having heard that the famous painting of Saraha at Sa-skya painted by the great Buddhist master Bo-dong Paṇ-chen Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal (1375–1451) was in a Newar style (*bal bris*) like the painting style of Byi'u-sgang-pa.[215] Bo-dong Paṇ-chen was a renowned scholar, and he is said to have been exceptionally skilled not only in the main traditions for establishing the proportions of sacred figures, but also as a painter. His biographer records that he exerted his skill in painting different types of divine figures, intending that they be taken as master examples or originals for the later creation of such images. As an example of a celibate ascetic without ornaments, he painted a Buddha image. In order to illustrate various ornaments and robes, he painted a white Sarasvatī. And as an example of a great siddha, later at Sa-skya he painted an image of Saraha. These he executed in a style of the Noble Land (*'phags pa'i yul*, Āryadeśa), India.[216] A number of subsidiary details or themes, however, he treated in a Chinese painting style, such as man-eating monsters (*rākṣasa*), monkeys playing with sages who sit in rapt meditative absorption, peacocks singing from the branches of trees, and pigeons in flight, buffeted by dangerous gusts of wind.[217] In the field of painting, a skill which Bo-dong Paṇ-chen himself is said to have mastered without extensive studies under any teacher, his own chief disciple was the painting master from mNga'-ris, bSam-gtan-rgyal-mtshan.[218] In connection with his great *De nyid 'dus pa* ("Compendium of Reality") collection, Bo-dong Paṇ-chen intended to commission thangkas for each and every one of the hundreds of maṇḍalas taught therein. He did not complete all of them before his passing, but he did commission some five hundred thangkas in all.[219]

Bo-dong Paṇ-chen's tradition may have been linked to a (related?) style called the Byang-lugs (lit. "Northern tradition"), which evidently existed in North La-stod (La-stod Byang) in western gTsang during the early or mid 15th century. Actually Shakabpa does not connect the Bye'u and Byang-lugs traditions directly, though such a connection may have been made by a now-inaccessible eastern Tibetan written source.[220] Not much is definitely known about such a "Northern [La-stod] tradition." Possibly one of the great painters of the tradition was the master later referred to simply as "sprul-sku Byang-pa." Si-tu Paṇ-chen mentions in his autobiography that when he visited Jo-nang in 1723, many thangkas painted by this artist could still be seen in one temple (having survived the forced conversion of the monastery to the dGe-lugs-pa tradition during previous century).[221]



Fig.30. Bo-dong Paṇ-chen. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 1047.

Many of the other references to this style are circumstantial. According to its brief mention by E. Gene Smith, for instance, the Byang-lugs was a school that was associated with the great scholar-prince Byang-bdag rNam-rgyal-grags-bzang (1395–1475) and his main seat, Ngam-rings in La-stod Byang.[222] This Byang-bdag ("Lord of Byang") was known by the title of "Ta'i si-tu chen-po," and he was a specialist in the Kālacakra tantric teachings. He was indeed one of the great disciples of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen.[223] Both student and teacher personally had more than a passive interest in painting. Among the many fields of

knowledge that they cultivated, both scholars showed a particular interest in the technical aspects of religious art. The *De nyid 'dus pa* collection that Bo-dong Paṇ-chen compiled and edited included a section on arts and techniques (*bzo rig*), in which he placed a treatise on painting technique.[224] A complete set of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen's compendium is said to have been commissioned by the Byang-bdag, who also acted as a major patron of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen's teaching and other religious activities.[225] The great prince also became an author on religious art in his own right: he composed a work on iconometry entitled *De bzhin gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi cha tshad* ("The Proportions of the Body of the Tathāgata").[226]

There is also circumstantial evidence suggesting a connection between Bo-dong Paṇ-chen and the Byang-bdag on the one hand with the abovementioned artist sprul-sku Bye'u on the other. All three were contemporaries (if the above dating of Bye'u is correct), and Bye'u seems to have been active within the political and religious domains of the other two. All the places where his paintings are said by Shakabpa to have survived are located either in western gTsang (La-stod Lho and Byang) or on the eastern border of mNga'-ris; these places included Byang Ngam-ring, which was the capital of the Byang-bdag, and Shel-dkar and rDzong-dkar, both sites of major Bo-dong-pa branch monasteries.[227] If Shakabpa's account is accurate, then it seems likely that both Bo-dong Paṇ-chen and his powerful noble disciple the Byang-bdag knew (and even patronized) Bye'u, one of the greatest artists of their secular and religious domains.

If such a Byang-tradition was a regional style during Bo-dong Paṇ-chen and Bye'u's era, one would expect it to be found in the great multi-temple stūpas of western gTsang, i.e. at Jo-nang, rGyang and dPal Ri-bo-che. The original paintings in the great stūpa of gCung Ri-bo-che, for instance, may have been in the Byang-lugs, since the founder, Thang-stong-rgyal-po, received both material support and artists from Byang-bdag rNam-rgyal-grags-bzang and his sons.[228] Thus the "Byang-lugs" may have been more or less the same as the "La-stod style" proposed by R. Vitali.[229] But written evidence is so far lacking to confirm this.

The murals at Gyantse (located outside of La-stod Byang to the southeast) were, by contrast, never classified by later tradition as belonging to any such "Byang tradition." Still, many of the artists who painted the Gyantse murals are mentioned in the inscriptions as having been from Lha-rtse,[230] a town lying about thirty kilometers southwest of Ngam-ring, which was the location of another great stūpa and the site of one of the La-stod Byang ruler's castles.[231] At certain high points in their political power, the princes of Gyantse also took possession of Lha-rtse, such as in 1424, and this may have contributed to the presence at Gyantse of numerous artists from Lha-rtse at about this time.[232]

Great Metal-workers and Sculptors from La-stod Byang

A related area in which the artisans of La-stod Byang excelled was in the making of metal images, and thus there apparently also existed a highly regarded Byang style for statues.[233] The subject of metal-working as applied to the making of sacred images had evidently fascinated Bo-dong Paṇ-chen, who is the presumed author of one of the only surviving accounts of early Tibetan metallurgy.[234] The Byang-bdag probably studied this subject too with Bo-dong Paṇ-chen since it was apparently included in the *De nyid 'dus pa*.[235] The great prince and his sons involved themselves in statue making either as patrons or as artisans. In 1461 when the 1st Dalai Lama dGe-'dun-grub (1391–1474) was building a large Maitreya image at the great monastery of Tashilhunpo near Shigatse, the prince made very substantial offerings in support of the project.[236] At that time, the artisan first chosen by dGe-'dun-grub to lead the work was one of the Byang-bdag's subjects, the Byang-pa artist (*byang pa'i dpon*) bKra-shis-rin-chen. (There had been some disagreement about who should head the project: the great Sle'u-chung-pa, Byang-pa bKra-shis-rin-chen, and a Newar master artist had all found supporters to nominate them.[237]) Relations between the Byang-

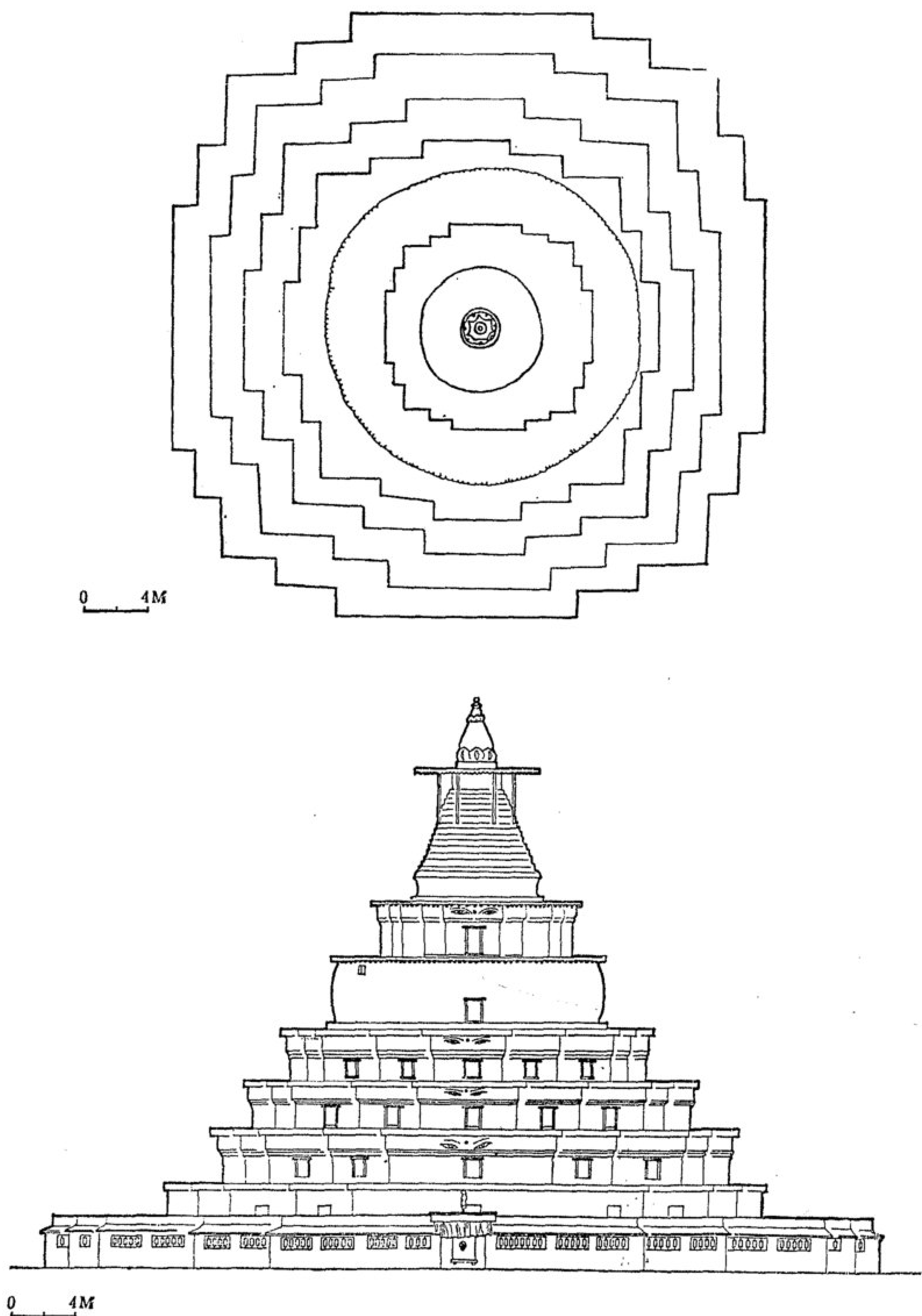


Fig. 31. gCung Ri-bo-che stūpa built by Thang-stong-rgyal-po. After Southern Ethnology and Archeology, vol. 4 (1991), p. 199.

Fig. 32. Thang-stong rgyal-po. Drawing by the Sherpa artist Oleshey (dge-chung Ngag-dbang-legs-bshad alias Sho-rong A'u Legs-bshad), in Kailash, vol. 3-4 (1975), p. 376.

bdag and dGe'-dun-grub were very cordial in this period—dGe-'dun-grub having just then sent back his answers to the written queries of Byang-bdag, much to the delight of the latter. But in the end, the unpredictable sage and adept Thong-stong-rgyal-po kept the Byang-pa master artisan (*dpon*) bKra-shis-rin-chen from coming to Tash-ilhunpo, apparently needing him and his assistants for one of his own projects.[238] (The Newar craftsmen who had not been chosen were somewhat resentful, and they hoped that something would go wrong with the work of the Tibetans, but the latter concentrated on their work and successfully completed it.[239])

In later years, the metal workers of this tradition also worked elsewhere in Tibet. The Byang-bdag's son, Ngag-gi-dbang-po, had a student named Sha-gzugs-pa who apparently took his craft to southeastern Tibet, where he built a number of the gilded copper stūpas at mDo-mkhar monastery.[240]

Notes

[194] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 108.

[195] sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya*, vol. 1, p. 583.2, called him sprul-sku Bye'u. Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen, *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*, p. 149.5, gave the same spelling. The alternative spelling Byi'u is given in such sources as De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs, *Rab gnas*, p. 17, and in Kong-sprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, vol. 1, pp. 571 (*oṃ* 208b).

[196] See sDe-srid, *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya*, vol. 1, p. 621.

[197] W. D. Shakabpa (1976), *Bod kyi srid don rgyal rabs*, vol. 1, p. 108.

[198] He was called Bye'u-sgang-pa also by the 18th-century scholar Si-tu Paṇ-chen. See the verses quoted in Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs (1985), p. 86, as translated below. Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen, *dGa' ldan rnam rgyal gling*, pp. 318, (*cha* 158b) refers to him as sprul-sku Bye'u-thang-pa.

[199] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 108: *yar stod byi'u sgang pa ni/ phal cher rab byung bzhi pa dang/ lnga pa'i nang byung ba zhig min nam snyam/ khong gi lo rgyus zhib pa ma brnyed kyang/ sa skya dang/ shel dkar/ byang ngam ring/ rdzong kha sogs la byi'u sgang pa'i bris zhes jo bo yab sras dang/ sa skya paṇḍi ta/ tshe dpag med/ kun rig/ mgon po ber dang/ zhal/ lha mo'i zhal thang bris rnying 'dra mjal ba dang/.*

[200] *Ibid.*, p. 108, refers to them with the phrase: *zhal thang bris rnying 'dra mjal ba dang/*. Mr. Shakabpa told me in a personal conversation, New Delhi, 18 March 1982, that the references to Bye'u's works at Gyantse could perhaps be found in Brag-mgon sprul-sku 'Jam-dbyangs-bstan-pa-rgya-mtsho, *dBus gtsang gnas yig mi brjed dran pa'i gsal 'debs gzur gnas mkhas pa'i rna rgyan* (New York Public Library?), and possibly also in the *Myang chos 'byung* or in the life of Rab-brtan-kun-bzang-'phags. I have not been able to locate any useful references in the latter two sources, though of course a brief passage might have been overlooked inadvertently.

[201] *Ibid.*, p. 108: *lhag par rgyal rtse dpal 'khor chos sder sa zla'i dus chen skabs 'grems gshom byed pa'i spyan ras gzigs kyi gos sku de dang/.*

[202] For references to several such great scrolls made in Gyantse around the early 15th century, see E. Lo Bue (1992), p. 564 and n. 33, and F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), p. 20.

[203] F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), p. 20, quoting 'Jigs-med-grags-pa, *rGyal rtse chos rgyal gyi rnam par thar pa* (IsMEO MS), pp. 132–141, and the *Myang chos 'byung* (1983 ed.), p. 52.

[204] sDe-srid, Zhu-chen, De'u-dmar (Painting Manual, chapter 30, and *Rab gnas*) and Kong-sprul all mention Bye'u in their accounts after two other famous artists who belonged to the mid-to-late 15th century. Shakabpa (1976), however, seems to indicate a clearer chronological sequence and dates Bye'u prior to the others. Nevertheless, Shakabpa places Bye'u a century or more too early, saying that he probably lived in the 4th or 5th Tibetan sexegenary cycle (i.e., between 1204 and 1323). This contradicts his later statement that Bye'u was linked to the creation of art works in the dPal-'khor-chos-sde and mchod-rten at Gyantse—which could not date to before the early 1400s.

[205] Although in many Western publications the great stūpa of Gyantse is called the "Gyantse Kumbum" (*rgyal rtse sku 'bum*), Tibetans usually refer to it as the dPal-'khor mchod-rten, i.e., the stūpa of the dPal-'khor-bde-chen monastic complex. But see also Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 108, who refers to the *mchod rten* as a "sku 'bum."

[206] E. Lo Bue (1992), p. 570. Cf. G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 606; Tucci (1932–41), vol. 4, pt. 2, p. 287. H. Karmay (1975), p. 34, n. 130, quotes a modern Chinese publication (Wenwu, 1961, no. 1, p. 53) as stating that the stūpa complex was begun in 1414 and took 10 years to complete.

[207] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 108: *sku 'bum nang gi ldebs ris kun tu bzang po gtso 'khor sogs phal cher bal bris 'dra ba la/.* (See Fig. 29.)

[208] See Tucci (1932–41), vol. 4, pt. 1, pp. 233–242. The murals of this chapel are depicted in vol. 4, part 3, illustrations 288 (Kun-tu-bzang-po), 290, and 300. For the placement of the mural, see also now F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), p. 270, no. 7. The mural is about 145 cm broad, and in the latter study the chapel is designated temple 3W. F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue have presented parts of four murals in this chapel; see plates 5 (Mahāvairocana) and 10 (Dharmadhātuvagiśvara), 16 (Avalokiteśvara), and 62 (detail of the maṇḍala of Padmāntaka). For detailed discussions of the first three of these plates, see *ibid.*, pp. 60, 62f., and 65. There is also a chapel dedicated to Kun-tu-bzang-po as the main *sculpted* figure, namely II.11 (2Eb') the Kun-bzang-lha-khang. Here three painters are named in the inscriptions: bTsan-ne of gNas-rnying, Ban-chen-skyabs of bZang-ri in sNye-mo, and Bla-ma-mgon. See F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), p. 261.

[209] G. Tucci (1932–41), vol. 4, pt. 2, pp. 50–52; English transl. (1989), p. 235. Most of the painters who are recorded to have worked on the third level were from Lha-rtse or thereabouts, though a few came from elsewhere. Those from Lha-rtse were nos. 26. dPal-chen of rDzong-shos in Lha-rtse (III.3), 27. Khro-rgyal-dbang-phyug of Khab-gsar in Lha-rtse (III.4), 28. Chos-skyong-bkra-shis of bShags-tshal [in Lha-rtse] (III.15), 29. bKra-

shis-bzang-po of bShags-tshal in Lha-rtse (III.17), and 30. Legs-pa of bSa'-lung in Lha-rtse (III.19).

[210] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 108: *sku 'bum nang gi ldebs ris kun tu bzang po gtso 'khor sogs phal cher bal bris 'dra ba la/ gtso lha che zhing/ lha mgron rnams re mig gam/ sgo khyim chung ngu'i nang bzhugs pa/ tshon li khri shas che la/ na bza' sogs la gser ris zhib cha che ba/ khro bo rnams bong thung ba/ dbu dang/ sus pa che ba/ sku mdog mthing nag yin tshe dpyad dkar po'am/ sngo sangs kyis 'then pa/ rus pa'i rgyan drug la zhib tshags ha cang che ba zhig yod/.*

[211] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 109: *...de bzhin bal bris byi'u sgang pa'i bris tshugs lta bur yod tshul thos/.*

[212] De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs, *Kun gsal tshon*, chapter 10.

[213] sDe-srid, *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya*, vol. 1, p. 583.3, described the style as "widely spread down to the present day" (*deng sang bar dar rgyas che*). See also De'u-dmar, *Rab gnas*, p. 17, which would seem to indicate that Bye'u was a compulsory member of this old list—a list that was repeated long after the Bye'u style had died out.

[214] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, vol. *ka*, fol. 142a. This was quoted by Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 110. The Tibetan text: *de mtshungs bka' 'gyur khang du lam rim brgyud pa 'dri rtsis la ma dpe byi'u'i ri mo zhig gtad pa'i da* [=de?] *lugs bris gnang 'dug pa sprul sku ba rnams ma goms pa'i skyon gyis lugs gnyis gang du yang mi gtogs pa'i bris gsar rang byon du byung/.* Dung-dkar Rin-po-che stated (Leibnitz, June 1995) that he has seen a thangka in the Potala with an inscription by the 5th Dalai Lama ascribing it to Byi'u.

[215] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 109: *bo dong dpal ldan chos* [p. 109] *kyi rgyal mtshan phyogs las rnam rgyal 137[5]–1451 phyag ris la shin tu mkhas pas dpal sa ra ha'i bris sku 'gran zla dang bral ba zhig yod pa sa skya'i nang rten la bzhugs par grags pa de bzhin bal bris byi'u sgang pa'i bris tshugs lta bur yod tshul thos/.* (The construction of this sentence is difficult to make out.) Bo-dong Paṇ-chen's biography by 'Jigs-med-'bangs, p. 170.3 (85a), refers to the same painting of Saraha which Bo-dong Paṇ-chen painted at Sa-skya.

[216] 'Jigs-med-'bangs, p. 169.6: *'jig rten thams cad kyi bsod nams kyi dga' ston du de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku gzugs bzhengs pa dag gi phyi mor 'gyur snyam du dgongs nas/ ji ltar rigs pa'i* [p. 170] *gzhi dag la nyid kyi phyag g.yas pa rin po che rnam par brkyang ste/ ri mo'i 'du ba mngon par 'du mdzad de/ rgyan med tshangs par spyod pa'i mtshan gyi dper/ ston pa bcom ldan 'das kyi sku dang/ sna tshogs pa'i rgyan dang/ gos kyis rlubs pa dag gi dper/ bcom ldan 'das ma dbyangs can ma dkar mo'i sku dang/ rnal 'byor dbang phyug rnams kyi dper/ slar yang dpal ldan sa skyar grub pa'i dbang phyug chen po sa ra ha'i sku rnams lta bas chog mi shes pa dpyod ldan dag gi mig gi bdud rtsir chags pa 'phags yul gyi lugs su bri bar mdzad cing/.* I am indebted to Mr. Tashi Tsering for these references.

[217] *Ibid.*, p. 170.4: *gzhan yang srin po mi za ba dang/ drang srong bsam gtan la mnyam par bzhag pa la spre'us rtsed mo byed pa dang/ ljon shing gi yal ga'i khrod nas rma bya skad 'byin pa dang/ phug ron lhag pas nyen nas bar snang 'gro ba'i tshul la sogs pa/ rgya nag gi ri mo'i lugs su rnam 'gyur ches mchog tu bkra ba dag bris te/ tshe gang du ri mo sbyang ba byas pa dag gis kyang* [p. 171] *'di lta bu'i ri mo'i ldongs dang rnam 'gyur ni sug ris su thon pa ma yin no//.*

[218] *Ibid.*, p. 405 (*ka* 203a): *de la sku tshe 'dir slob dpon chen po dang sbyang ba chen po byed pa la rag ma las par de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku dang/ pho brang chen po rgyal ba sras dang bcas pa'i phyag tshad kyi rjes su 'gro zhing bde mgyogs su mig gi bdud rtsi 'thung ba'i ri mo khyad par can gyi bka' babs mnga' ris kyi pir thogs kyi rgyal po bsam gtan rgyal mtshan/.* I owe this reference to Mr. Tashi Tsering.

[219] *Ibid.*, p. 389: *sngar snga mo'i dus su dpal de kho na nyid 'dus pa nas gsungs pa'i dkyil 'khor thams cad ri mor bri bar dgongs nas/ rim pa bzhin du bzhengs pa'i thang sku lnga brgya tsam yod cing yongs su rdzogs par ni ma grub par/.* He also patronized the making of figures of maṇḍalas and tantric deities from molds.

[220] E. Gene Smith (1970), p. 46, n. 81, states, without specifying his first sources: "The brief accounts of art that are accessible belong to the Gadri or Menri Sarma of Khams and usually treat this school [the *Bye'u-ris*] together with the Changluk (*Byaṅ-lugs*). Kloṅ-rdol mentions that Byi'u Lha-bzo was born in Yar-klung."

[221] Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 104.6: *sprul sku byang pa'i bris thang ngo mtshar can mang po bzhugs pa....* It is possible, however, that this painter merely came from La-stod Byang but worked in a later period and style, such as under the patronage of Tāranātha or his predecessors.

[222] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 47, n. 84. The dates of the Byang-bdag and other facts are as given by the sDe-srid in his history of Tibetan Āyurveda, *dPal ldan gso ba*, pp. 310.5–315.6. A brief sketch of his life is also found in dPal-ldan-chos-kyi-bzang-po's *g.Yas ru byang pa'i rgyal rabs*, reproduced in the volume *Rare Historical and Literary Texts from the Library of W. D. Shakabpa* (New Delhi: 1974), pp. 184–186.

[223] The biographer 'Jigs-med-'bangs, p. 405.4, lists the Byang-bdag as primarily a disciple of medical practice.

[224] Different manuscripts of texts on art belonging to this section have been reprinted in vols. 2, 9, and 10 of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen's "Collected Works" (= the *De nyid 'dus pa*), New Delhi: Tibet House, 1969–70.

[225] dPal-ldan-chos-kyi-bzang-po, *g.Yas ru byang*, pp. 185.4–186.2: *dpal de kho na nyid bsdus pa ... gyi glegs bam* [11a] *yongs su rdzogs pa bzhengs te/ rtsom pa po de nyid la chos kyi 'khor lo rgya chen po bskor bar gsol ba btab nas/ bshad sgrub kyi bdag rkyen mdzad pa sogs te/.*

[226] sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, *dPal ldan gso ba*, p. 313.6 (156a). The same treatise is also mentioned by A-

khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho, p. 584, MHTL no. 13068.

[227] The Gung-thang (rDzong-dkar) chos-sde was founded in 1394 by Paṇ-chen Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1352–1405), abbot of Bo-dong and uncle of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen. The same master had also founded the Shel-dkar chos-sde in 1385. See Bo-dong Paṇ-chen, *gSang 'dus chos 'byung*. Collected Works (=*De nyid 'dus pa*), vol. 64, pp. 470.1 and 471.5.

[228] Cyrus Stearns (1980), "The Life and Teachings of the Tibetan Saint Thang-stong-rgyal-po, 'King of the Empty Plain,'" pp. 129f. (based on 'Gyur-med-bde-chen, *dPal grub pa'i dbang phyug brtson 'grus bzang po'i rnam par thar pa kun gsal nor bu'i me long*, ff. 86b, 131a, and 135b). Thang-stong-rgyal-po was a metal-worker and artisan of considerable skill, and among the images he fashioned, Kaḥ-thog Si-tu (p. 391.4) describes one of Amitāyus at sKyed-tshal that was mentioned in his biography: *thang rgyal phyag bzo rnam thar nas byung ba'i tshe dpag med.* For more about this interesting figure, see also the articles W. Kahlen (1993), "Thang-stong rgyal-po - A Leonardo of Tibet," and J. Gyatso (1986), "Thang-stong rgyal-po, Father of the Tibetan Drama: The Bodhisattva as Artist."

[229] See R. Vitali (1990), p. 133, and also R. Vitali in V. Chan (1994), pp. 54f. and 455. Vitali (1990) holds that a "La-stod school of art" which was responsible for the three stūpas at Jo-nang (ca. 1330), rGyang (early 1400s) and dPal Ri-bo-che (1449–1456), was close to but different from the painting style practiced further east in gTsang by the artists at Gyantse. See also A. Chayet (1994), p. 185, n. 781.

[230] G. Tucci (1932–41), vol. 4, part 1, p. 19.

[231] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, pp. 453.6 and 455.6.

[232] E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), pp. 26 and 69.

[233] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 48, n. 85: "Bronzes which clearly belong to this style exist. They are strikingly realistic. A photograph of one such image, a statue of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen, appears in R. A. Stein, *La civilisation tibétaine* (Paris: 1962). I have seen a similar Bo-dong portrait statue in Nepal." The illustration referred to is no. 31, facing p. 177, in the English translation of Stein's work (R. A. Stein [1972]). An old statue of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen, perhaps the one mentioned by Smith, is now kept in an upper-story chapel of a monastery outside Bodhanāth. It is said to have come from the Bo-dong-pa monastery at Po-rong, which was also the source for the *De nyid 'dus pa* manuscripts at the Tibet House Library in New Delhi.

[234] Bo-dong Paṇ-chen, *mKhas pa 'jug pa'i bzo rig sku gsung thugs kyi rten bzhengs tshul*, Collected Works, vol. 2. E. G. Smith in an English introduction has called attention to the importance of this work. Pages 215–254 of the Tibetan deal with the making of statues from various materials and with related topics.

[235] dPal-ldan-chos-kyi-bzang-po, *g.Yas ru byang*, pp. 185–6 (9b-11a). As quoted above, this source implies that the Byang-bdag requested Bo-dong Paṇ-chen to teach the *De nyid 'dus pa*, which included sections on all the five main fields of knowledge (*rig gnas: vidyāsthāna*).

[236] Ye-shes-rtse-mo, p. 264.

[237] Ye-shes-rtse-mo, p. 266. Sle'u-chung-pa had recently been patronized by dGe-'dun-grub, as the same source mentions. Several of his works were preserved in the monastery of Gong-dkar and elsewhere.

[238] *Ibid.*, p. 267: *dgun chos la ngam ring du phyin te dris lan phul/ ta'i si tu bas kyang dgyes pa chen po mdzad/ lha bzo ba ni/ thang stong rgyal por grags pas gegs byas te bkag//*. In the end, the great Maitreya was designed by sNar-thang-pa dpon-po Byang-rin, and the actual copper work was done by one 'Brong-rtse-ba. See *ibid.*, p. 268.

[239] Cf. R. Vitali (1990), pp. 133 and 136, n. 66.

[240] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 355.5 (178a): *byang bdag sras ngag gi dbang po'i slob ma sha gzugs pas bzhengs pa'i zangs gser mchod rten 'dom gang ba'i bder gshegs mchod rten cha brgyad/*.



Fig. 33. sMan-bla-don-grub. Modern drawing by Pema Rinzin (Padma-rig-'dzin, b. 1963), after an example from his teacher, O-shod sKal-bzang-blo-gros, son of Ye-shes-rdo-rje of dPal-'bar, followers of the sMan-ris.

Chapter 3

sMan-thang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub and the Early Followers of His Tradition

Although the artists of gTsang had thus formulated the beginnings of distinctive Tibetan styles by about the 1430s, the indigenous accounts of art place much more emphasis on the next generation of painters, who began to flourish shortly thereafter in about the 1450s.[241] Several outstanding painters and sculptors appeared in this next period, but as far as later generations were concerned, the greatest and most influential of them all was sMan-thang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub.

A few details about the life of sMan-bla-don-grub have come down through the traditional accounts.[242] He was born in sMan-thang district of northern Lho-brag, a region adjoining Bhutan, and consequently he later became known as "sMan-thang chen-mo" ("The great master from sMan-thang")[243] or just "sMan-thang-pa" ("The man from sMan-thang"). His birth, which probably occurred in the second or third decade of the 15th century, is said to have coincided with the discovery of a valuable deposit of native vermilion in Lho-brag.[244] He was a brilliant youth who quickly mastered the many writing scripts that he was taught. However, it was not until after he had married and then left his wife that he finally discovered his true vocation.

His marriage drove him to despair. Rather than stay together with an incompatible spouse, he ran away and thereupon embarked on a wandering life. Once while at Yar-'brog sTag-lung (northwest of Lho-brag, about twenty kilometers south of sNa-dkar-rtse), he happened to find a brush case and some example drawings, and from that point on he felt a passionate interest in painting. He then travelled to gTsang and such centers as Sa-skya in search of an expert painting master. In the end, according to the traditional account, he met his teacher, rDo-pa bKra-shis-rgyal-po, who was evidently one of the most skilled painters of the day.[245]

The style of painting that the young sMan-bla-don-grub first learned was probably one of those found in the great stūpas of gTsang that were erected and painted in the 1430s and 1440s, such as at Gyantse. At a certain point in his development, however, sMan-bla-don-grub hit upon a new stylistic synthesis for which he became famous. The tradition of painting that he then founded, which continues down until the present, became known as the sMan-ris or "the painting style of sMan [-thang-pa]."

The most significant stylistic innovation of sMan-bla-don-grub was the greater degree to which he incorporated Chinese-style landscapes and other features into the backgrounds of his paintings.[246] The key change seems to have been a more consistent employment of simplified Chinese-style blue and green landscapes for his backgrounds. Concomitant with this was the abandonment of the prevailing red (or reddish-orange) and blue backgrounds filled largely with the decorative designs favored by Newar or Bal-bris artists.[247] According to tradition, once when sMan-bla-don-grub was viewing a Chinese (silk?) scroll-painting (*si thang*)[248] known as the "Great Chi-

nese [-style depiction of the Buddha's] Deeds" (*rgya mdzod* [better: *rgya mdzad*] *chen po*), he suddenly recalled his previous lifetime in which he had been the Chinese painter responsible for that work.[249] From that time onward, there is said to have arisen before his aesthetic imagination pictures of a style much closer to Chinese paintings. This style was described by later Tibetan writers as the "lDan-tradition" (*ldan lugs*), possibly because the old sMan-ris tradition or something closely resembling it continued to flourish in subsequent periods in the lDan-ma district of Khams northeast of Derge.[250] Another possibility is that *ldan lugs* means "[Well]-Endowed Tradition."[251]

gNas-rnying, Its Chinese Scroll, and Gyantse

There was probably a concrete basis for the above historical tradition, for sMan-bla-don-grub is furthermore recorded in a still earlier source to have studied and copied a certain early masterwork of Chinese Buddhist painting. There survived in Tibet until at least the 1560s a thangka of the Great Deeds of the Buddha (*ston pa'i mdzad thang*) made by sMan-bla-don-grub which he had copied from the Chinese scroll painting (*si thang*) of gNas-rnying.[252] This may well have been the work referred to above as the "Great Chinese [depiction of the Buddha's] Deeds" (*rgya mdzad chen po*).

In addition to his exposure to Chinese Buddhist masterpieces, sMan-bla-don-grub also consciously studied and mastered the other various "national" styles existing in his day. In the colophon to a brief manual intended for novice painters entitled *bsTan bcos legs bshad nor bu'i 'phreng ba*, he signs himself as the painter (*ri mo mkhan*) sMan-bla-don-grub, who had mastered all the painting styles that one might wish to paint in from such countries as India, China, Nepal and Tibet, and who had also mastered (Sanskrit?) grammar, poetics, two Indian scripts and all Tibetan scripts.[253] In those days it was simply a part of a great artist's repertoire to be able to depict different subjects and themes in different styles.[254]



Fig. 34. Details from a Chinese-style painting of the "Hundred Deeds" of the Buddha. After P. Pal (1984), p. 161, pl. 69. Cf. also ibid., pl. 70.

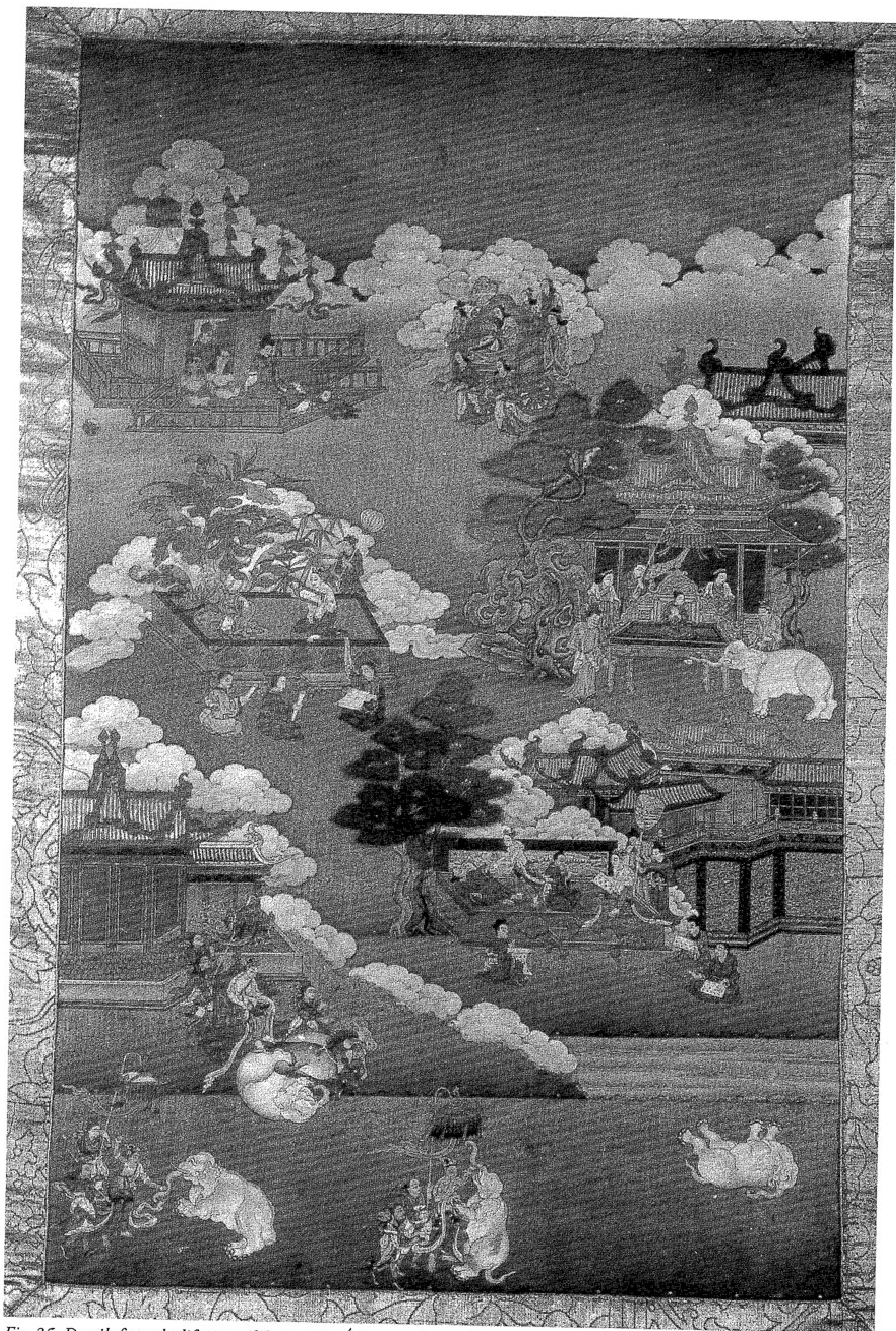


Fig. 35. Details from the life story of the Buddha Śākyamuni according to a Chinese tradition. The thangka was commissioned by the 8th Dalai Lama 'Jam-dpal-rgya-mtsho (1758-1804), and was seemingly painted by an artist from A-mdo. Thangka, late 18th c., 91 x 62 cm. Now preserved in the Potala Palace, Lhasa. After Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 34.

Fig. 36. The Gyantse monastic compound. Photograph by P. F. Mele, after Tibet (Calcutta, 1975).

Fig. 37. Map of the surviving structures in the Gyantse monastic compound. After Southern Ethnology and Archeology, vol. 4 (1991), p. 234. No. 1 is the gTsug-lag-khang; no. 2, the stūpa; no. 3, the Gur-pa grwa-tshang; and no. 9, the wall for hanging great thangkas.

Pl. 4. *The Siddha Lu-i-pa and a Tibetan monk. Two figures on the western wall of the Lam-'bras temple of the gTsug-lag-khang at Gyantse. Painted by dPal-'byor-rin-chen of gNas-rnying. Mural, 1425. Photograph U. von Schroeder, 1992. Published: E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), Gyantse Revisited, p. 421, pl. 152.*

Pl. 5. *The Mahāsiddhas Ka-ta-ra and Dra-nu-ri. A pair of Mahāsiddhas from the northern wall of the Lam-'bras temple, gTsug-lag-khang, Gyantse. Sponsored and painted by dPal-'byor-rin-chen of gNas-rnying. Mural, 1425. Photograph U. von Schroeder, 1992. Published: E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), Gyantse Revisited, p. 426 and 431, pls. 157-8.*

Pl. 6. The Mahāsiddha Sa-ra-na. One of the Mahāsiddhas from the northern wall, Lam-'bras temple, gTsug-lag-khang, Gyantse. Sponsored and painted by dPal-'byor-rin-chen of gNas-rnying. Mural, 1425. Photograph U. von Schroeder, 1992. Published: E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), Gyantse Revisited, p. 424, pl. 155.

At the beginning of the work, the author pays his respects to his two main teachers: dPal-'byor-rin-chen and bSod-nams-dpal-'byor, whom he describes as the most learned and expert artists then in Tibet.[255] These artists are otherwise known from among the painters who worked on the murals of both the dPal-'khor stūpa and main temple: dPal-'byor-rin-chen of gNas-rnying, a monk artist, and dge-bshes bSod-nams-dpal-'byor, also of gNas-rnying, were both master painters who worked together in the same chapel of the Kumbum (II.15; =2Sb' the sMra-seng lha-khang).[256] As mentioned above, dPal-'byor-rin-chen of gNas-rnying is also recorded to have di-

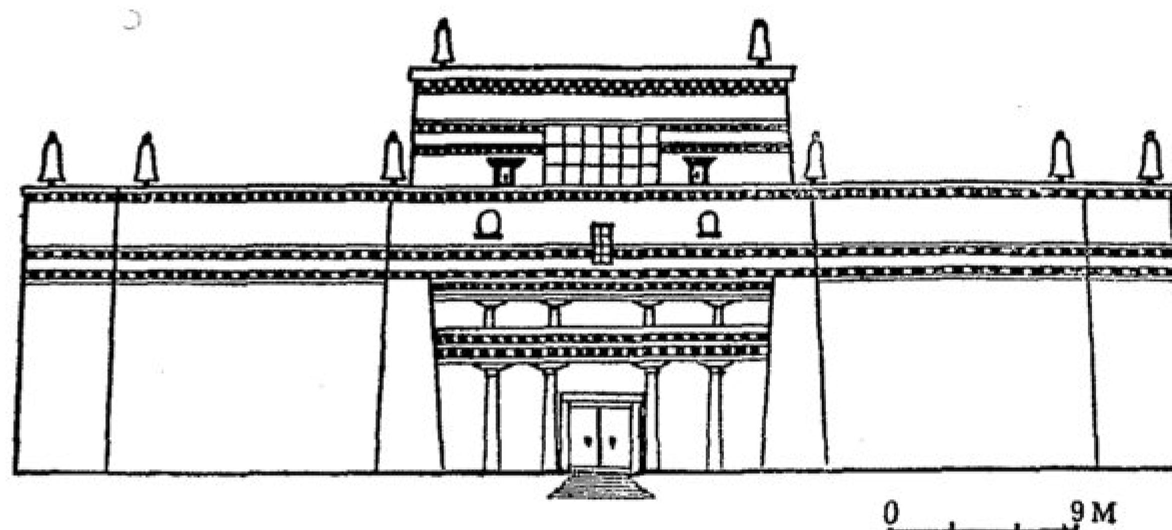


Fig. 38. The Gyantse gTsug-lag-khang, south elevation. After Southern Ethnology and Archeology, vol. 4 (1991), p. 235.

Pl. 7. Gling Ras-pa and the Paṇ-chen Śrī Śāriputra. Two figures from the northern wall, Lam-'bras temple, gTsug-lag-khang, Gyantse. Sponsored and painted by dPal-'byor-rin-chen of gNas-rnying. Mural, 1425. Photograph U. von Schroeder, 1992.

rected a group of thirty-seven artisans at Gyantse in 1418 in the making of a great cloth image whose main figure was Buddha Śākyamuni.[257] The great master artist (*dpon mo che*) dPal-'byor (-rin-chen?) of gNas-rnying was furthermore responsible for the exquisite murals in the Lam-'bras-khang of the dPal-'khor monastic center

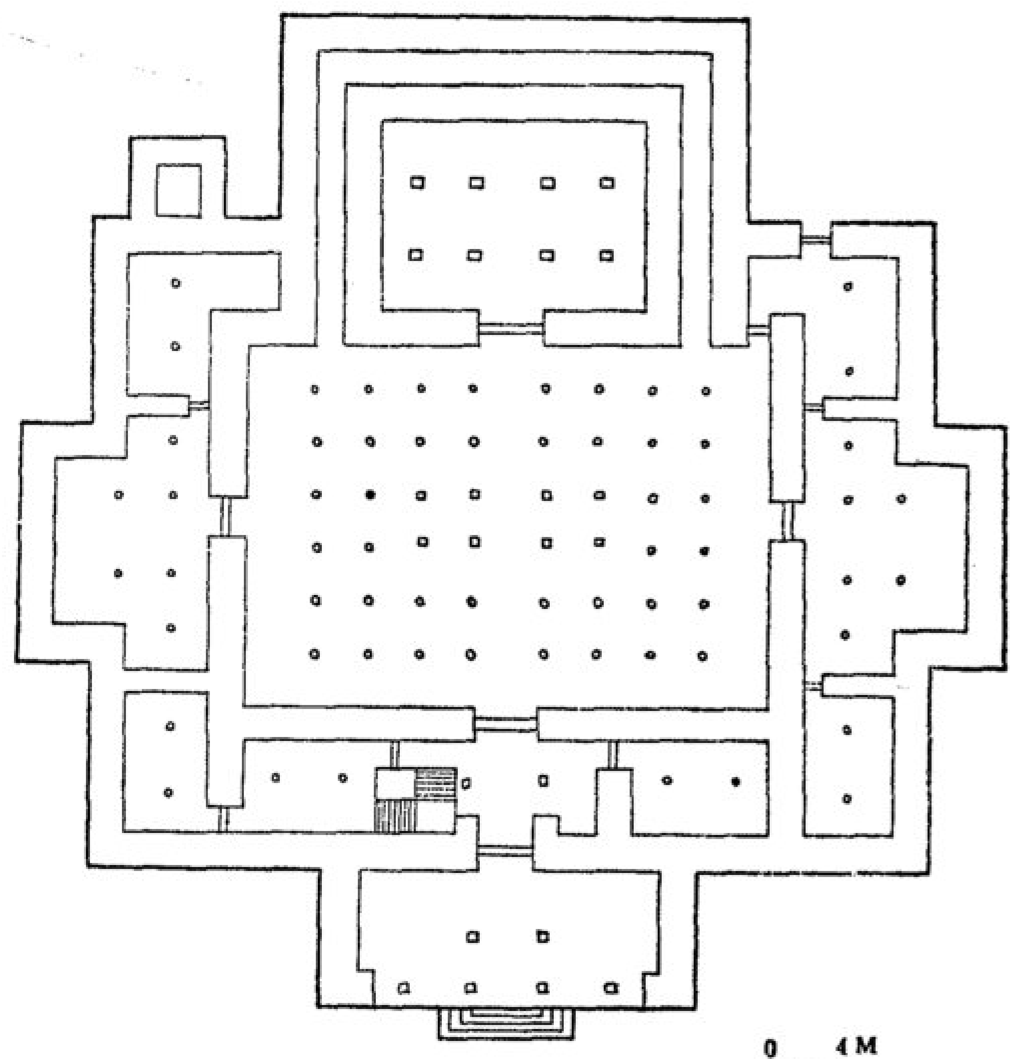


Fig. 39. The Gyantse gTsug-lag-khang, floor plan of the ground floor. After Southern Ethnology and Archeology, vol. 4 (1991), p. 235.

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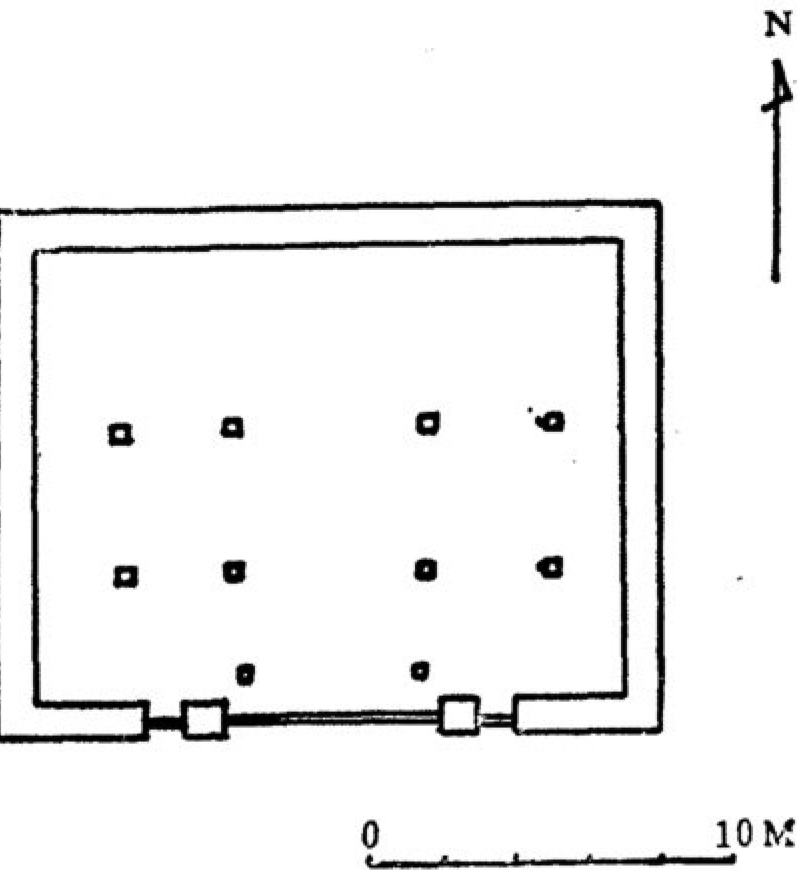


Fig. 40. The Gyantse gTsug-lag-khang, floor plan of the 1st and 2nd floors. After Southern Ethnology and Archeology, vol. 4 (1991), p. 235.

that were painted in 1425.[258] Regarding the style of this artist, it is interesting to note that five hundred years after the painting of the latter murals, the pilgrim-savant Kaḥ-thog Si-tu found the paintings of the eighty mahāsiddhas in this chapel to be exceedingly wonderful, but described them as being in an "old Newar style" (*bal bris rnying pa*).[259] (We need not, however, place too much weight on this passing judgment, and most modern observers would probably describe them otherwise.) By contrast, Kaḥ-thog Si-tu viewed the murals in the nearby Kumbum simply as representing, in effect, an early gTsang style. He was awed by the "blues and greens like a blue sky, the minium orange like burning fire," and the murals struck him as being "much more beautiful than the earlier Newar painting style after the manner of statues (*li tshugs*), [these Gyantse murals] being the work of the matchless artists of gTsang, and therefore appearing like a [refreshing] eye-nectar."[260]

In the 1430s the same artists from gNas-rnying were the main painters in major projects. gNas-rnying-pa dpon-mo-che dPal-'byor, father and son, are mentioned in one nearly contemporary source as the greatest artists (painters) who participated in the painting of the Gyantse stūpa (consecrated in 1436). (Mentioned after them are the two great sculptors Nam-mkha'-bzang-po and Lha'i-rgyal-mtshan.)[261] In ca. 1437 the great master dpon-mo-che Ma-the-ba bSod-nams-dpal-'byor did the sketch of the great cloth image of Maitreya that was completed in 1439.[262]



Fig.41. 'Jam-dbyangs-rin-chen-rgyal-mtshan, abbot of gNas-rnying. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 543 (a 271a).

It is not surprising that the young sMan-bla-don-grub would have been drawn in the course of his wanderings from his home in Lho-brag to the then-thriving Gyantse principality or to one of its main religious centers, the ancient monastery of gNas-rnying. Gyantse was at that time experiencing the peak of its glory during the thirty-year reign of the prince Rab-brtan-kun-bzang-'phags (r. 1412–1442), the great patron of the dPal-'khor complex.[263] Under this prince's leadership, Gyantse could vie politically and culturally even with the Phag-mo-gru-pa rulers of Tibet (who had their seat in southern dBus). The monastery of gNas-rnying, moreover, was an important center in its own right. It was the seat of the illustrious and powerful master mkhan-chen 'Jam-dbyangs Rin-chen-rgyal-mtshan (1364–1422) until his death in 1422, as well as home to a flourishing group of painters, including some of the best in all of gTsang.[264] This great abbot 'Jam-dbyangs Rin-chen-rgyal-mtshan himself had a highly developed knowledge of arts and crafts (*bzo rig*), and he was the chief patron/overseer of numerous projects including a great brocade thangka (*gos sku chen mo*).[265] For this project he gathered a number of master artists, the chief of whom were Ma-the-ba dPal-'byor-rin-chen and dpon bKra-shis-mgon.[266] Afterwards he was invited to China by the Chinese emperor (probably the Ming emperor Chengzu [Yongle], reign 1403–1424).[267] In his own place the abbot sent chen-po dNgos-grub-rin-chen, who went to Cong-rdo[268] and received in the name of the gNas-rnying mkhan-po and his abbatial successors a crystal seal, a patent confirming rank and certain jurisdictions, presents, and inner and outer robes.[269] It may be that the famous *si thang* scroll painting of gNas-rnying was sent from China to gNas-rnying in this period. I have found no other similar mentions in the gNas-rnying history of close contacts with China on the part of earlier or later abbots, but one cannot exclude the possibility that it was brought to Tibet by



Fig. 42. The Buddha Śākyamuni. Detail of inscribed Chinese scroll painting, dating to 1412, Ming court, preserved at gNas-rnying, 2.5 x 1.3 m. Photograph courtesy of Helmut and Heidi Neumann.

a still earlier mission returning from the Chinese court. Another important Ming-period painting dating to 1412 still survives at gNas-rnying, though it depicts a standing Buddha without any landscape in the background.[270] (Fig. 42.)

sMan-bla-don-grub's Treatises

The above-mentioned manual on painting methods by sMan-bla-don-grub, if it is authentic, transmits important information about the identities of two of sMan-bla-don-grub's chief teachers, who interestingly enough here do *not* include the rDo-pa bKras-rgyal usually specified in the later sources as his main master. It also corroborates the account that sMan-bla-don-grub had a special link with the ancient and now partially ruined monastic complex of gNas-rnying which stands about ten kilometers south of Gyantse, west of the river in the upper Myang Valley of gTsang.[271]

As far as I can determine, the manual was completely unknown to the learned tradition of Tibet. (Could it have been lost in Tibet but preserved until fairly recently in Bhutan?) Whatever its origins, it should be investigated carefully for it does appear to be a relatively old manual, dating to the mid 15th century. It has thirteen chapters, which briefly treat the subjects: (1) preparation of the cloth surface, pp. 179–182; (2) laying down the proportion lines, pp. 182–194; (3) mixing colors, pp. 194–199; (4) outlining and the making of brushes, pp. 199–201; (5) shading, pp. 201–202; (6) secondary outlining or similar ornamental effects on base colors, pp. 202–203; (7) clear glair (*ka pi*), pp. 203–205; (8) pigments from dyes, pp. 205–206; (9) painting of murals, pp. 206–208; (10) more general observations about painting method, pp. 208–209; (11) occasions requiring the artists to take special care, pp. 210–211; (12) the benefits of making sacred pictures, pp. 211–217; and (13) how artist and patron should treat each other, pp. 217–218.



Fig. 43. mKhyen-dbang pir-thog sMan-bla-don-grub-zhabs. Drawing of sMan-bla-don-grub, after Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs (1993), p. 106.

sMan-bla-don-grub also composed a major treatise on iconometric theory and practice in which he set forth his tradition in detail.[272] The work was entitled *bDe bar gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rab tu byed pa yid bzhin nor bu*, and it consisted of seven main sections: (1) an exposition of the major and minor characteristics of a Tathāgata, (2) refutation of the texts belonging to those holding incorrect positions, (3) explanation of the faults of imperfect proportions, (4) setting forth the system of correct proportions, (5) statement of the virtues of proper dimensions, (6) characteristics of the artist and patron, and (7) detailed explanation of the steps of artistic practice. He states near the end of the treatise that he wrote it at the request of all of his students from dBus and gTsang, beginning it in the upper Myang or Nyang Valley of gTsang and completing it in gTsang-rong 'Bras-yul rDzong-dkar (in eastern gTsang, northwest of Gyantse)—thus further confirmation of his connection with Nyang-stod, the vicinity of Gyantse and gNas-rnying.[273] In writing this work, sMan-bla-don-grub based himself largely on passages dealing with the proportions of sacred figures found in the Tantras and their commentaries. This work became a classic within Tibetan iconometric and art-related

literature, and it was hailed by many later savants as the basic Tibetan work on the subject.

As far as the proportions of his images were concerned, sMan-bla-don-grub is said to have maintained scrupulous fidelity to previous Indo-Tibetan tradition. According to the record of received teachings (*gsan yig*) of the 5th Dalai Lama, sMan-bla-don-grub passed down to his disciples the system of iconometry that had been formulated by the earlier master Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub on the basis of the canonical sources, a system that was said to have been later clarified by rTa-nag Ri-mkhar-ba (='Phreng-kha-ba).[274]

Fig. 44. dGe-'dun-grub. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 853 (a 426a).

Important Murals and Other Major Projects

The traditional accounts do not give precise information about where or when sMan-bla-don-grub executed his main paintings. The sDe-srid, for instance, only provides a general time frame for his activities: sMan-bla-don-grub is merely said to have been a contemporary of dGe'-dun-grub-pa (1391–1474). The latter once had a dream in which the goddess Tārā appeared and said that on the following day an emanation of Mañjuśrī would arrive. When sMan-bla-don-grub appeared the next day, he was thus identified as being an emanation (*sprul pa*) of that Bodhisattva of Wisdom.[275]

Several more specific details, however, can be found in the biography of dGe'-dun-grub-pa (posthumously recognized as the 1st Dalai Lama), who was one of sMan-bla-don-grub's main patron's. In 1458, for instance, the "King of Painters" (*pir thogs rgyal po*) and chief artist (*dpon mo che*) sMan-thang-pa, along with his assistants, painted murals for that religious master in the main temple (*gtsug lag khang*) of the latter's great monastery of Tashilhunpo (bKra-shis-lhun-po, founded in 1447), northwest of Gyantse near the

Fig. 45. Mañjuśrī, Bodhisattva of wisdom. Modern drawing, Khams-pa sMan-ris style. From Padma-rnam-grol-mtha'-yas, p. 103.



Pl. 8. The Birth of Śākyamuni Buddha from the side of Māyādevī at Lumbini. An episode from the deeds of the Buddha in a Chinese manner. Detail of Tashilhunpo mural, location and age as yet unknown (mid 17th c.?). After Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals, p. 66, pl. 53.

confluence of the Myang-chu and the gTsang-po.[276] There, in the main assembly hall, he and his group of painters completed two major murals, one of Vajradhara surrounded by eighty siddhas and one of Śākyamuni surrounded by the Sixteen Elders (*sthaviras*). He also sketched the compositions for the great murals of the twelve great deeds of the Buddha. Afterwards the other murals were gradually completed by individual painters such as Lha-btsun bsTan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan, bshes-gnyen Sangs-rgyas-bzang-po and dpon-mo-che bSam-gtan-pa.[277] In early 1464 sMan-thang-pa executed there in the main temple building (*gtsug lag khang*) the required murals depicting in a Chinese style the Great Deeds of the Buddha (*rgya mdzad chen mo*).[278] Also ascribed to sMan-thang-pa chen-mo at Tashilhunpo were a mural on the north side depicting the pure realm of Tārā (*g.yu*



Pl. 9. Māyādevī Conveying the Infant Siddhārtha Home. An episode from the deeds of the Buddha in a Chinese manner. Detail of Tashilhunpo mural, location and age as yet unknown (mid 17th c.?). After Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals, p. 69, pl. 56.

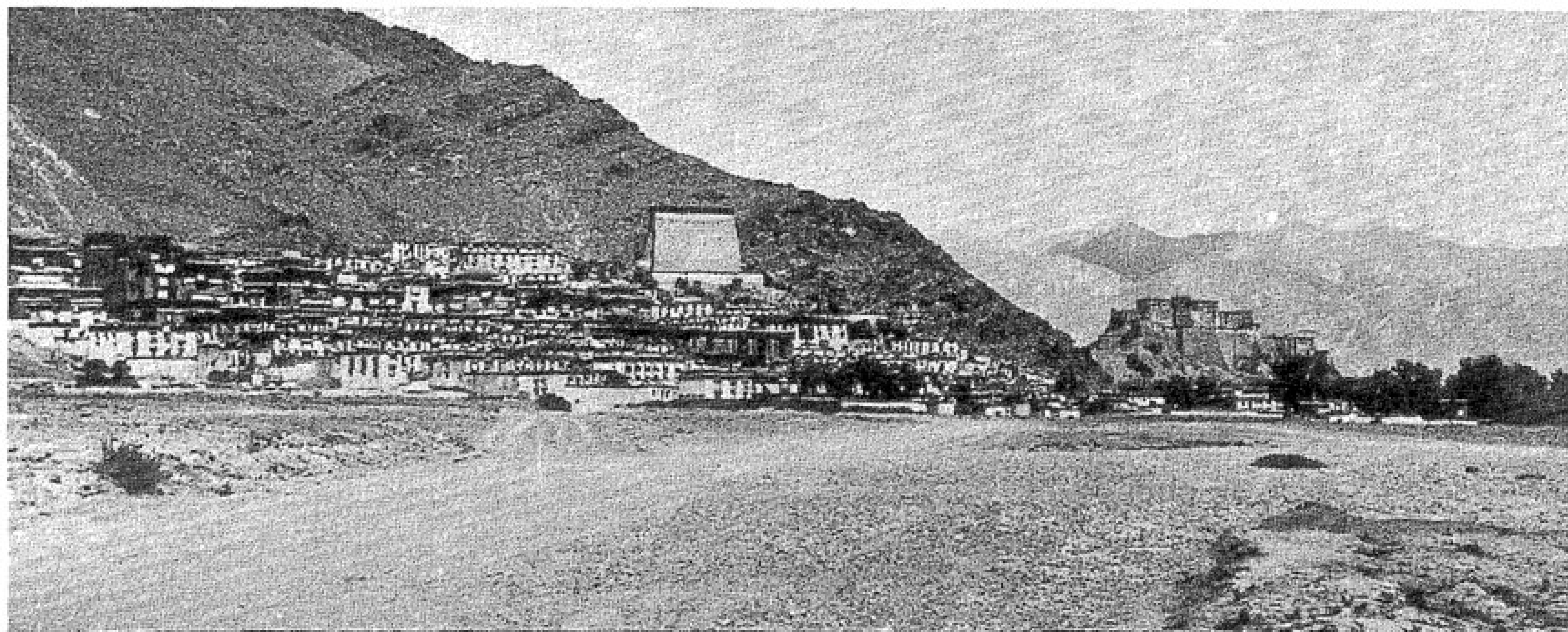


Fig. 46. Tashilhunpo Monastery. After Snellgrove and Richardson (1968), p. 44, bottom. Photograph H. E. Richardson.

lo bkod pa'i zhing khams) and paintings on two pillars facing the main entrance door. The latter depicted two entrance protectors: the fierce deities Acala and Hayagrīva.[279]

Again in 1468, sMan-bla-don-grub came to Tashilhunpo with his assistants, and he directed the making of a great cloth-appliqué image of the Buddha, measuring eighteen fathoms (about 28 meters) long and 12 fathoms (about 19 meters) wide. At the main figure's heart dGe-'dun-grub-pa himself wrote a long prayer for the spreading of the Buddhist doctrine.

Fig. 47. Tashilhunpo Monastery. After Tibet Today (Peking, 1974), p. 22.

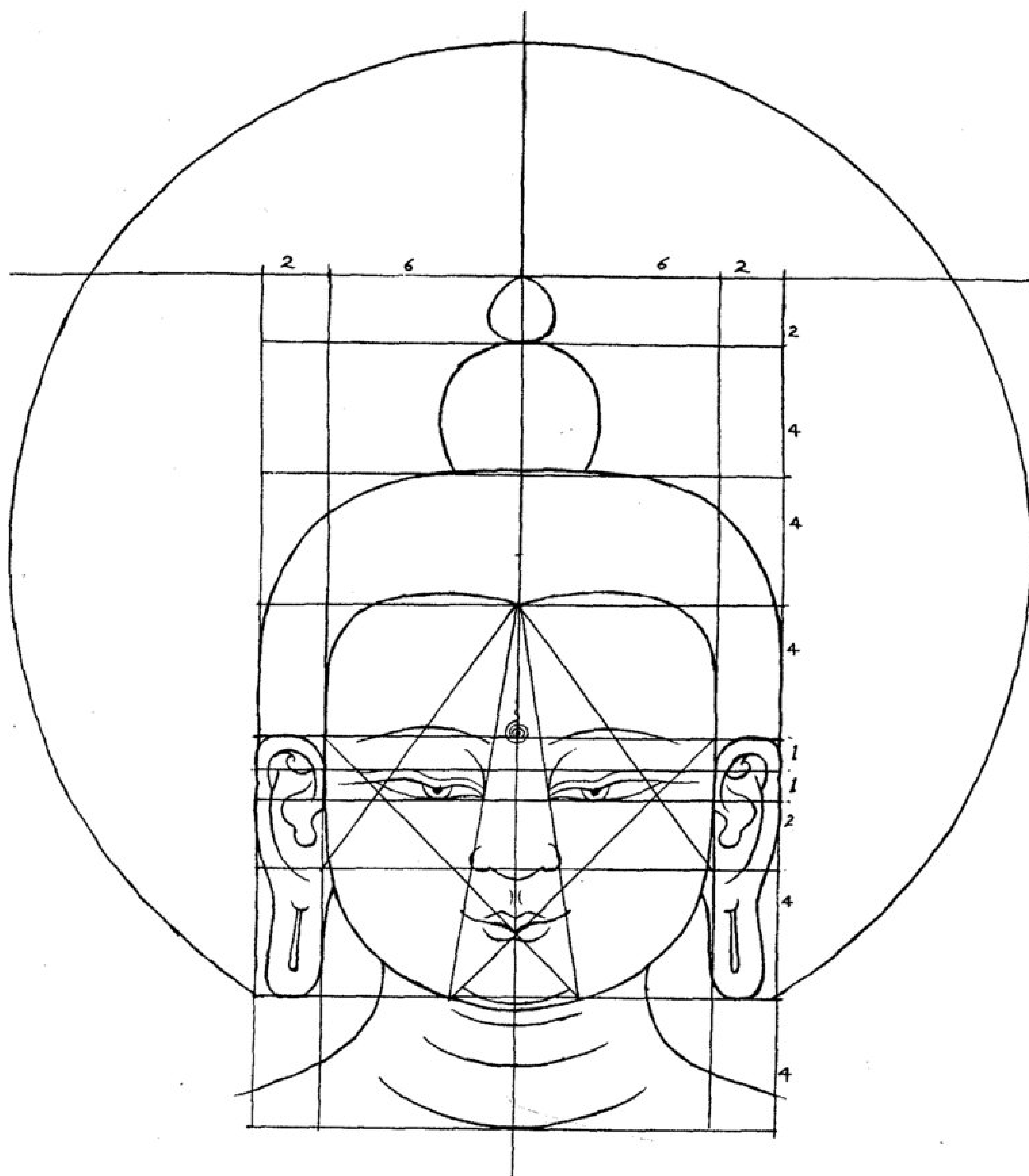


Fig. 48. The "Face Maṇḍala" of the Buddha. From Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs (1993), p. 49.

This image was huge. When its cloth was unrolled over the front lawn of the monastery and the sketch was being drawn upon it, they wanted to get some idea of how large the figure would turn out to be. They decided to try to unfurl it on the side of the vast white front wall (? *spe dkar*) of the monastery, but the place chosen for first displaying it proved to be much too small. Before unrolling it, the master sMan-thang-pa estimated that they would be able to see at least as far down as the Buddha's begging bowl, while others thought that the whole figure of the Buddha would fit into that space. In fact, when the vast cloth was unrolled, only the giant "face-maṇḍala" of the Buddha became visible, to the amazed laughter of all present. dGe-'dun-grub-pa took this to be a good omen.[280]

The chief artist (*dpon mo che*) sMan-thang-pa continued to work there at Tashilhunpo in the following year, 1469, making a smaller cloth image of Tārā that measured six by eight fathoms (using ten rolls of cloth remaining from the previous project), and also executing some of the murals of protectors in the entry chapel in the main temple devoted to the four guardians of the directions.[281] Responsible for some of the sculpted figures at this time was the lha-bzo-ba sTobs-po-che.[282]

Other References to the Great sMan-thang-pa and His Works

The paintings of sMan-bla-don-grub were especially treasured by the religious masters of his day and of the next generation. For instance, it is recorded that the great scholar gSer-mdog paṇ-chen Shākya-mchog-ldan (1428–1507) possessed a small thangka of White Mañjuśrī that the great sMan-thang-pa had painted with utmost care. The master Shākya-mchog-ldan would arrange offerings before it preparatory to beginning the composition of any major new work.[283]

sMan-bla-don-grub seems to have had a long and productive career, but if he had first learned painting in about the 1430s or 1440s (when he was in his late teens or twenties and already married once) then it is hard to imagine him actually painting much himself after the 1480s, though he may have closely directed the work of others. Nevertheless, according to the Karma-pa history begun by Si-tu Paṇ-chen (1700–1774) and completed by 'Be-lo Tshe-dbang-kun-khyab, sMan-bla-don-grub (together with his son) was working even as late as the early 16th century, directing the painting of the murals of Yangs-pa-can, a monastery in northwestern dBus province that the 4th Zhwa-dmar Karma-pa Chos-grags-ye-shes (1453–1524) started constructing in 1503.[284] sMan-bla-don-grub and his son are said to have executed many marvelous murals there (allegedly together with mKhyen-brtse), but exact details are not available and it seems more likely that this was one of the later sMan-thang-pa masters and not sMan-bla-don-grub.[285] If this was truly sMan-bla-don-grub himself and not one of his successors, then he must have been very old by then.[286]

sMan-bla-don-grub's Style

At least two brief written descriptions exist of the great sMan-thang-pa's style by traditional authorities. The first and earliest is by De'u-dmar dge-bshes. It dates probably to the first half of the 1700s, and it consists of four terse verses (ch. X, vv. 39–42) in his manual of art about the tradition of "sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa":

> The coats of pigment and shading are thick. In most respects the layout is just like a Chinese scroll painting, with the exception that it is [here] slightly less orderly than [in] that one. [Also, the figures] are not placed in [close] groups, but are a bit more spread out. (X 39)

> The bodily posture, skeletal structure and musculature/flesh contour are excellent. Necks are long, shoulders are withdrawn [or: high?], and clearness predominates. There is much shading. The colors are detailed, soft and richly splendid. Malachite and azurite [pigments] predominate. Because of the blue and green [colors], (X 40)

> from a distance the painting is very splendid, and if one approaches [nearer], it is detailed. The forms of robes and scarves are not symmetrical. Even though the basic pigments are many, they are fewer than in China. There is greater richness in tone than in one hundred [other painted] images. The shading is evident through [the use of shading washes of] a somewhat greater strength. This is the tradition of the sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa. (X 41–42)

A still briefer description is found in the anonymous and probably later painting manual *Ri mo mkhan* (see Appendix J). Merely two lines (11c-d) seem to describe sMan-thang-pa's tradition, and perhaps a later version of it at that:

> The background earth was colored with a medium malachite green (*spang shun*) and the sky with a medium azurite blue (*mthing shun*). Gold outlining was widely employed [or was clear?]. This is known was the tradition of sMan-thang. (11c-d)

More detailed descriptions of sMan-bla-don-grub's style can only be based on paintings reliably attributed to him. Many of the monasteries that contained his murals were, however, probably renovated or repainted at least once between the 15th and 20th centuries. Moreover, most of the murals that somehow escaped being covered up through renovations have probably fallen victim anyway to the systematic destruction carried out during the hysteria of the Maoist "Great Cultural Revolution" in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Nevertheless, a few murals attributed to sMan-bla-don-grub did somehow survive down to the present, and these must be located, documented and studied in the future. According to the account of a recent artist of Tashilhunpo, for instance, the original murals painted by sMan-thang-pa in the great assembly hall there are still extant. These include those of Vajradhara sur-

rounded by the Eighty Great Adepts (*mahāsiddhas*), of the Buddha Śākyamuni surrounded by the Sixteen Elders, and of the Twelve Great Deeds of the Buddha.[287]

There is also at least a small possibility that a few of sMan-bla-don-grub's scroll-paintings still exist. A pilgrimage record from about 1920 states, for instance, that a (twenty-two-piece?) set of thangkas of the Sixteen Elders attributed to him still existed until then at the mKhar-chu bla-brang in the southern borderland of dBus.[288] Other such sets or individual works may have been hidden by their keepers during the 1960s, or they may even have been spirited out of Tibet. Perhaps a few such works (with identifying inscriptions?) remain to be found also among the surviving collections in Tibet, China or elsewhere.

In addition to works attributable to sMan-bla-don-grub himself, it will also be important to try to trace thangkas painted by his son, nephew, grandsons, or other outstanding early followers of his tradition, i.e. Old sMan-ris works datable to the late 15th or early 16th century. Bhutan in particular must have possessed in the past a number of works in the Old sMan-ris style, though no doubt most have since perished in the fires that plague the wooden monasteries of that land. A careful investigation of the major monastic art treasures of Bhutan, Ladakh and the Himalayan border regions of Nepal and Sikkim might go some way toward making up for the terrible losses to Tibetan Buddhist art suffered in Tibet in the 1960s and 1970s during the worst outbreaks of Chinese-led mass hysteria and barbarism.

Early Painters in the sMan-thang-pa Lineage

The style of sMan-bla-don-grub was emulated, continued and further developed by many successive generations of artists. Initially, some of the main upholders of his style included members of his own family: two of sMan-bla-don-grub's main disciples were in fact a son and a nephew of his.

sMan-thang-pa 'Jam-dbyangs-pa

His son 'Jam-dbyangs-pa appears for instance in the iconometric lineage of the 5th Dalai Lama, where he is called sku-mdun 'Jam-pa'i-dbyangs.[289] This son participated in the painting of the Yangs-pa-can murals, and he is also recorded to have sketched the figure of the Buddha for the great

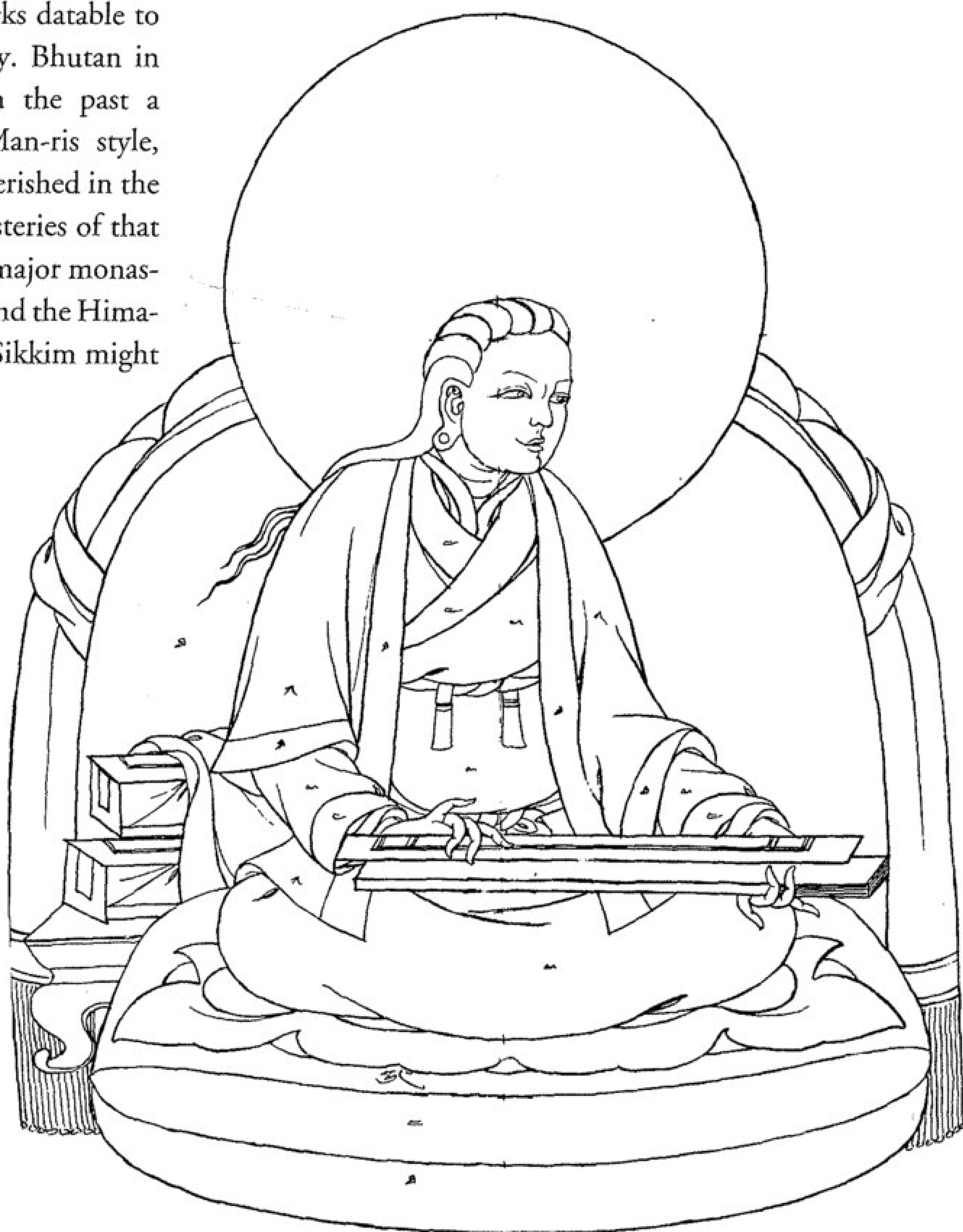


Fig. 49. mKhas-dbang sMan-thang 'Jam-pa'i-dbyangs. Drawing of "sMan-thang-pa 'Jam-pa'i-dbyangs" (here meaning probably sMan-bla-don-grub), after Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs (1993), p. 105. This illustration includes color-code annotations.

brocade thangka of Yangs-pa-can during its preparation in circa 1506. On this occasion he put on slippers of silk brocade, and while walking over the great cotton cloth backing, he sketched the image by means of a charcoal crayon (*sol pir*) held in a special handle. Afterwards he indicated the colors of the cloth pieces to be applied to each spot by using a color-code notation (*tshon yig*), and then the brocades were accordingly cut and applied to the right places.[290] sMan-thang-pa 'Jam-dbyangs-pa is said to have visited and marveled at the consummately furnished and decorated great temple tent of the 7th Karma-pa Chos-grags-rgya-mtsho (1454–1505),[291] and he may also have been the artist called sMan-thang-pa 'Jam-dbyangs-dpal who is mentioned in the autobiography of 'Brug-chen Padma-dkar-po (1527–1592) as having been sent by sku-mdun Zhing (=Zhing-shag-pa Tshe-brtan-rdo-rje) of bSam-grub-rtse (Shigatse).[292]

sMan-thang-pa Lhun-grub-pa?

In a somewhat earlier period, the master sMan-thang-pa and his [chief] son, together with his brother[s] (*sprul sku sman thang pa yab sras mched bcas*) are recorded to have painted at gSer-mdog-can in the year 1491 on a large cloth an image of the Buddha surrounded by the Sixteen Elders. The biography of Shākya-mchog-ldan by Jo-nang Kun-dga'-grol-mchog (1507–1566/7) records that their work there was attended by miraculous signs; on the day the sketch was carried out, a "shower of flowers" fell from the sky.[293] The next year sMan-thang-pa and his sons (*sman thang pa yab sras rnams*) executed the murals in the main temple and assembly hall of gSer-mdog-can. The patron, Shākya-mchog-ldan, instructed them to paint just images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, such as the Thirty-five Buddhas of Confession. "It is not sure how things will later turn out," the great lama-patron commented at the time, and he did not order any depictions of lamas to be painted. The murals were completed in the next year, the year of the ox (1493).[294]

The biography of gSer-mdog paṇ-chen Shākya-mchog-ldan in a slightly later passage records that the artist sMan-thang-pa nang-pa Lhun-grub-pa executed paintings in about 1495 for Shākya-mchog-ldan.[295] (Perhaps this Lhun-grub-pa was the same sMan-thang-pa who had been working at gSer-mdog-can already in 1491–93.) The same biography mentions a "sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa" as one of a select group of only four laymen whom Shākya-mchog-ldan initiated a few years later in 1498, together with an assembly of some five hundred monks, into the *Vajrāvalī* cycle.[296] Some of this artist's paintings were evidently the scenes of miraculous events, such as his paintings of rNgog lo-tsā-ba's life, of Rong-ston surrounded by forty masters, and of Shākya-mchog-ldan's teacher Don-yod-dpal-ba—all three being paintings he made (apparently after Shākya-mchog-ldan's death in 1507) by copying paintings originally executed by Shākya-mchog-ldan himself. Showers of flowers were seen many times in the vicinity of these paintings.[297]

sMan-thang-pa Zhi-ba-'od and Others

Another great disciple of sMan-bla-don-grub was his nephew sMan-thang-pa Zhi-ba-'od.[298] He is mentioned as the prominent artist involved in the painting of the "Great Person" (*skyes mchog*) [Mar-pa lo-tsā-ba] at the Sras-mkhar of Lho-brag in 1484 under the patronage of the 4th Zhwa-dmar Karma-pa.[299]

The biography of the 8th Karma-pa Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje (1507–1554) records that a "sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa" received Madhyamaka doctrinal instruction from him after the latter had established his encampment near bSam-grub-rtse (Shigatse) in gTsang in 1540.[300] He was evidently one of sMan-bla-don-grub's grandsons or great-grandsons. A son of "sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa" (i.e. of 'Jam-dbyangs-pa or Lhun-grub-pa?) was named sMan-tshe-ba. The death of the latter in about the 1540s is mentioned in the autobiography of Jo-nang Kun-dga'-grol-mchog (1507–1567).[301] Still more artists from this lineage are mentioned in the sources and will be discussed below.

Early Traces of sMan-ris Compositions in Block-prints

The Gung-thang Xylograph Editions

By the mid 16th century, the sMan-thang-pa tradition had spread west at least to Gung-thang on the eastern border of mNga'-ris. In the colophon to the Gung-thang (Kun-gsal sGang-po-che) xylograph of Klong-chen-pa's *Theg pa'i mchog rin po che'i mdzod* dated the water-female-snake year (1533), the depictions of deities on the front and back pages (*le lha*) are said to have been drawn by the Gung-thang-pa master artist (*mkhas pa*) Dri-med, a follower in the tradition of sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa.[302] These black-and-white prints of line drawings are some of the few dateable works from the early sMan-thang tradition.

The same master Dri-med also contributed, together with such skilful painters as Chos-dpal and sMon-lam, to drawing the illustrations for the Gung-thang edition of 'Brom-ston's biography within the *Bu chos* section of the *bKa' gdams glegs bam* collection.[303] (The work in the modern reprint from New Delhi is wrongly described as being from the "old Tashilhunpo blocks.") Here it seems probable on stylistic grounds that the first illustration on page 3 is the work of the above-mentioned artist mkhas-pa Dri-med.

Drawings in a similar style are also found in a printed edition of a Bo-dong-pa *Lam rim* manual entitled *sKyes bu gsum gyi lam rim rgyas pa khrid du sbyar ba*, the blocks for which were also carved in Gung-thang during this period. In the recent reprint (New Delhi: Ngawang Topgye, 1979), the work is ascribed to the otherwise unknown master "rje-btsun gSang-ba'i-byin," but in fact this is merely an alias of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal, as the late Dezhung Rinpoche explained.[304] This, the only known edition of the work, is dated in the xylographic colophon to the year 1546.[305] The blocks were carved with the support of the Gung-thang ruler Khri Kun-bzang-nyi-zla-grags-pa-bzang-po'i-lde (1514–1560).[306] The artists responsible for the drawings included mkhas-pa dPal-chen and gTsang-pa bSod-nams-'od-zer.[307]

Fig. 50. Chos-sku Kun-bzang yab-yum, Longs-sku rNam-snang and sprul-sku rDo-rje-'chang. Illustrations of rDzogs-chen masters. Xylograph, 1533 Gung-thang edition of the Theg mchog mdzod, f. 1b. Original drawings by the sMan-bris artist mkhas-pa Dri-med. Courtesy of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project.

Fig. 51. dGa'-rab-rdo-rje, 'Jam-dpal-bshes-gnyen, and Shrī-siṃha. Illustrations of rDzogs-chen masters. Xylograph, 1533 Gung-thang edition of the Theg mchog mdzod, f. 1b. Original drawings by the sMan-bris artist mkhas-pa Dri-med. Courtesy of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project.

Fig. 52. Two rDzogs-chen masters, Jñānasūtra and Vimalamitra. From the 1533 Gung-thang edition of the Theg mchog mdzod, f. 2a. Original drawings by the sMan-bris artist mkhas-pa Dri-med. Courtesy of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project.



Fig. 53. Padmasambhava and Khri-srong-lde-btsan. From the 1533 Gung-thang edition of the Theg mchog mdzod, f. 2a. Original drawings by the sMan-bris artist mkhas-pa Dri-med. Courtesy of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project.



Fig. 54. The rDzogs-chen masters lDang-ma Lhun-rgyal and Nyang Ting-nge-'dzin-bzang-po. From the 1533 Gung-thang edition of the Theg mchog mdzod, f. 509b. Original drawings by the sMan-bris artist mkhas-pa Dri-med. Courtesy of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project.



Fig. 55. The rDzogs-chen masters lCe-btsun Seng-ge-dbang-phyug and rGyal-ba Zhang-ston. From the 1533 Gung-thang edition of the Theg mchog mdzod, f. 509b. Original drawings by the sMan-bris artist mkhas-pa Dri-med. Courtesy of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project.



Fig. 56. Bo-dong Paṇ-chen Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal and Shrīmad Buddha (dPal-ldan-sangs-rgyas). Illustrations from the 1546 Gung-thang edition of the Bo dong Lam rim. Reprinted New Delhi, Ngawang Topgyal, 1979.



Fig. 57. mTshan-ldan Chos-legs and rJe-btsun dPal-ldan-dar (1424-1510). Illustrations from the 1546 Gung-thang edition of the Bo dong Lam rim. Reprinted New Delhi, Ngawang Topgyal, 1979.

A Late-15th-century Xylograph Print from gTsang

For further hints of the sMan-ris style's development at a somewhat earlier stage, one can turn to the figures illustrated in the xylographic editions of Shākya-mchog-ldan's *Rigs gter rnam bshad* (composed in 1482), a commentary on Sa-skya Paṇḍita's classic on Buddhist logic and epistemology, the *Tshad ma rigs gter.* The name of the artist is not given in the colophon, but the blocks themselves date to the period 1482 to 1504. The editing and correcting of the blocks were done by Shākya-mchog-ldan's personal secretary mNga'-ris-smad lo-tsā-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan.[308] We know that in the mid 1490s Shākya-mchog-ldan was an avid patron of sMan-thang-pa Lhun-grub-pa, though there is no concrete evidence actually linking him to these blocks. Still, stylistically one is here clearly already in the aesthetic world of the sMan-ris, with rocks, clouds and flowers forming the essential ingredients of even these simple backgrounds.



Fig. 58. and 59. Amoghashrī (Don-yod-dpal-ba) and possibly Shākya-mchog-ldan. Two figures from the late-15th-century xylograph edition of Shākya-mchog-ldan's Rigs gter rnam bshad, p. 2 (1a). Published New Delhi, Ngawang Topgyal, 1984.



Comparisons with Earlier Xylographs

Within the few early xylographs from Tibet itself now available to me, one can document a stylistic change from the early 1400s to the early 1500s. The contrast is especially striking between central Tibetan block-prints of the period 1420s–1430s (i.e. the pre-sMan-ris period)—such as for instance the old dGa'-ldan edition of Tsong-kha-pa's *Lam rim 'bring po*[309] or the early edition of Rong-ston's *Phar phyin* commentary[310]—and those of a later period, such as the edition of Shākya-mchog-ldan's commentary that probably dates to the 1480s or 1490s.









Figs. 60, 61, 62, and 63. Buddha, Maitreya, Atiśa, and Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang-grags-pa. Four illustrations from the old dGa'-ldan xylograph edition of Tsong-kha-pa's Lam rim 'bring po. Xylograph, dBus, 1420s/30s. Courtesy of the Private Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

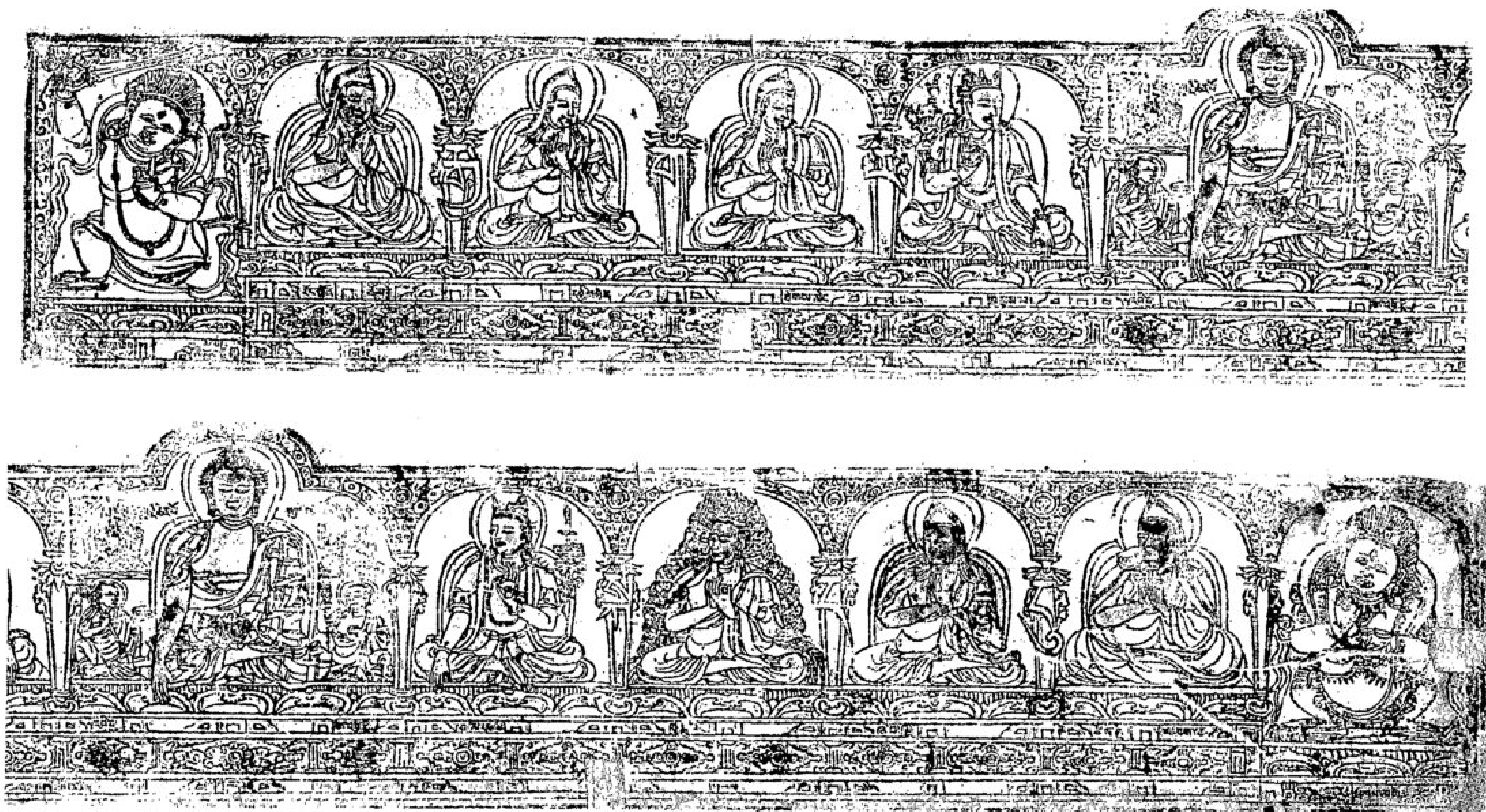


Fig. 64. Elaborate row of dbu-lha figures from an early Central Tibetan print of Rong-ston's Phar phyin (Abhisamāyālaṃkāra) commentary. Xylograph, dBus, ca. 1420s/30s. Courtesy of the Tibet House, New Delhi. Published Biblia Tibetica (Kyoto), vol. 2, fol. 1.

Similarly it is interesting to compare the illustrations from early- or mid-15th-century printed editions of two basic Indian Madhyamaka treatises, the *bZhi brgya pa* (*Catuḥśataka*) of Āryadeva and the *rTsa ba shes rab* (*Mūlamadhyamakakārikās*) of Nāgārjuna. The first xylograph, which roughly dates to the 1420s or 1430s, was probably carved at or near Gong-dkar in dBus province under the patronage of the powerful noble I-nag bZhi-'dzom of Gong-dkar, one of the main ministers of the Phag-mo-gru-pa ruler Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1374–1432).[311] Its portrayal of Āryadeva and Candrakīrti embodies the typical stylistic elements of the Bal-bris that one would expect to find in this period. By contrast the second xylograph, that of Nāgārjuna's work, already shows the key Chinese landscape elements for which the sMan-ris later was known.[312] The latter blocks were carved under the patronage of a religious king *(chos rgyal)* called in the colophon "Kun-tu-bzang-po," who in this period could hardly have been anyone other than the famous Rab-brtan-kun-bzang-'phags of Gyantse.[313] This same great prince is known to have patronized another printing project in the year 1439, and it seems that the present blocks themselves date to that period, i.e. to about 1440, the final years of Rab-brtan-kun-bzang-'phags's life.[314] (Stylistically, however, one would have expected a slightly later dating.) The name of the artist responsible for these splendid portrayals of Nāgārjuna and Mañjuśrī has unfortunately not been transmitted, though the block carvers are mentioned by name: they were members of a family of famous carvers from Mon-mo rDo-ra.[315] A carver seemingly from the same familial group, namely Mon-rdor Ngag-dbang, is mentioned in the colophon to a later (1465) Central Tibetan edition of the *Lam rim 'bring po*.[316]




Figs. 65 and 66. Āryadeva and Candrakīrti. Xylograph, dBus, ca. 1430s. Courtesy of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala. The original is LTWA class. no. kha 3, 12.

One must of course be cautious in drawing conclusions until a greater number of such images from early Tibetan prints can be identified and compared. In any case, the key stylistic landscape innovations in question can already be found in a few of the images printed in the Peking edition of the Tibetan canon dating to as early as 1410.[317] But this too would tend to agree with the tradition that art works from China—especially from the Ming court of the early 1400s—were brought to Tibet where, a few decades later, their treatments of landscapes began to be copied by the greatest painters even for ordinary settings, as backgrounds for non-Chinese themes.




Figs. 67 and 68. Mañjuśrī and Nāgārjuna. Xylograph, gTsang?, mid 15th century. Courtesy of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala. The original is LTWA class. no. kha 3, 13 (acc. no. 2508).

Figs. 69 and 70. *rDo-rje-'chang and Mai-ṭi-mkha'-spyod. Xylograph, Peking, ca. 1412. After Y. Imaeda (1977), plates 1 and 9.*

Fig. 71. Padmapāṇi? Xylograph, Western China, ca. 1290s. From a printed text of the Dus kyi 'khor lo (Kālacakra). Original in the Tibet House library, New Delhi. Published: Encyclopedia Tibetica (Tibet House, New Delhi, 1973), vol. 116, p. 2.

Notes

[241] T. G. Dhongthog Rinpoche, *Important Events in Tibetan History* (Delhi: 1968), p. 123, as cited by E. G. Smith (1970), n. 73, gives 1409 as the date for the appearance of the *sMan bris* painting style, though the year given by Dhongthog Rinpoche was actually nine years previous: *lcags 'brug 1400: lho brag sman thang du 'khrungs pa'i lha bris mkhas pa sman bla don grub kyis rgya bal gyi ri mo gzhir bzhag thog rig rtsal gyi legs cha du mas brgyan te ri mo'i bris rgyun gsar du dar ba lho brag sman bris zhes pa byung/.* My translation: "In the iron-dragon year [of the 7th cycle (?)] there appeared the "Painting-style of Lho-brag sMan [thang]" (*lho brag sman bris*), a painting tradition that was newly spread by the master artist sMan-bla-don-grub, a native of Lho-brag sMan-thang, who took as his basis the art of China (*rgya*) and Nepal, and enhanced [it] with numerous excellent artistic features." (Dhongthog Rinpoche always gives the dates first, before explaining which important events took place in them.) This dating should refer to the iron-dragon year of the next 60–year cycle, i.e. to the year 1460.

[242] As with the accounts on the artist Bye'u, the earliest indigenous source on sMan-bla-don-grub known to me is the *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya* of sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho. As mentioned above, the accounts of Zhu-chen, De'u-dmar (*Kun gsal tshon* [the art manual], chapter 30, and *Rab gnas*) and Kong-sprul all apparently descend directly or indirectly from that source, as do the accounts of such recent scholars as the Venerable Chogay Trichen (1979), pp. 59f., and L. S. Dagyab (1977), pt. 1, p. 37.

[243] The word *chen mo* ("great one") may be a title like *dbu chen* (=*bzo bo dbu mdzad che ba* "main leader and director of craftsmen"). The great artist mKhyen-brtse was also known as "mKhyen-brtse chen-mo." Cf. the modern *che mo*, "senior, head," and *che mo ba*, titles for a master artisan in some modern dialects (e.g. *shing bzo che mo ba*, "master carpenter or woodworker"). I know for instance a master artisan—a sculptor and metal-worker—from gTsang rTse-gdong in Central Tibet who is known to one and all as just "*che mo lags.*"

[244] Cf. E. G. Smith (1970), p. 43, n. 74, who misunderstood this to mean that sMan-thang-pa himself had discovered this deposit or had made a technological innovation in the use of new pigments. The discovery of such a deposit should rather be understood as a sort of auspicious portent (*rten 'brel*). See also J. Huntington (1990), p. 288. This vermilion from sMan-thang may be the "*sman mtshal*" mentioned in the painting manual *Ri mo mkhan*, p. 118. The late W. D. Shakabpa told me in a personal conversation on the 18th of March, 1982, in New Delhi, that he had visited Lho-brag sMan-thang and that, at the time of his visit, people who claimed descent from the same family as sMan-bla-don-grub were still living there. They showed him a brush container (*pir snod*) reputedly once owned by the great sMan-thang-pa, as well as the site of the deposit of native vermilion (*mtshal kha*) said to have been discovered at his birth. However, there did not appear to be any cinnabar left to be extracted.

[245] A painter by this name is not otherwise known, i.e. apart from in the traditional accounts on art where he appears as "rDo-pa bKras-rgyal." He was probably one of the artists actively working in gTsang in or around the 1430s and 1440s, but so far he has not turned up as such in the inscriptions. One outstanding painter of the period ca. 1410–1420 was dpon bKra-shis-mgon, a colleague of Ma-the-ba dPal-'byor-rin-chen. See the *gNas rnying chos 'byung*, vol. 2, f. 45a. Among the artists who are recorded in the inscriptions to have worked at Gyantse and Narthang, one is called bKra-shis of Shag-tshal in Lha-rtse (Tucci 1941, p. 19, no. 10). But the latter would seem to have been the bKra-shis-bzang-po of bShags-tshal in Lha-rtse (III.17) (Tucci's list, no. 29) and bKra-shis-bzang-po (I.10) (Tucci's list, no. 8) who is the dpon-btsun bKra-shis-bzang-po at Narthang (Tucci 1949, p. 207). One of the latter's colleagues at Narthang was an unnamed monk-artist (*dpon btsun*) from dBus province.

[246] Certain stylized landscape elements, ultimately of Chinese origin, had already been incorporated into the mainstream of Tibetan painting prior to sMan-bla-don-grub. See H. Karmay (1975), p. 60, and R. Vitali (1990), p. 107. sMan-bla-don-grub seems to have carried the process further, enlivening and opening up landscapes and learning from the example of Chinese painters.

[247] The first step in this direction has already been taken in many of the murals of the Gyantse gTsug-lag-khang with the backgrounds treated as blue skies with formalized cloud striations above, a feature also found in the Yüan-Newar court style. The next step seems to have been to carry the imitation of Chinese-style landscapes further, as also already found for instance in some of the murals of Gyantse stūpa (e.g. in chapel 1E), in the depiction of certain pure lands. On the latter, see now F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), p. 106. See also E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), pp. 27–29, who remark (p. 28): "...It appears that the paintings at Gyantse represent the stage immediately preceding the birth of the first Tibetan school of painting [i.e. that of sMan-thang-pa]."

[248] The term *si thang* (alternatively: *si'u thang, se'u thang*, or even *zi thang*) seems usually to refer to a Chinese-style painting, often on a silk support, with figures placed in a well-executed landscape. The earliest authority, sDe-

srid, specifically states that the *si thang rgya mdzod chen po* (or: ...*rgya mdzad chen po*) was a painting (and not an embroidery or weaving). See his *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya*, vol. 1, p. 582.5: *bris pa'i si thang*. bsTan-pa-rab-brtan (1988?), p. 60, explains the word *si thang* in one context (re: art works which had influenced Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis) as referring to paintings which were "[Chinese] imperial [court?] paintings of the Ming dynastic period" (*ming rgyal rabs skabs kyi rgyal srol ri mo'i si thang zhes pa*). A *si thang* could depict various themes. See for instance Jo-nang Kun-dga'-grol-mchog, *Paṇḍi ta*, p. 213, who refers to a *Lam 'bras bsi thang* [sic]. gTsang mkhan-chen dPal-ldan-rgya-mtsho refers in his biography of the 10th Karma-pa, p. 182.3, to a *si thang* of the Sixteen Elders painted by (gTsang mkhan-chen?) himself that was offered to the 10th Karma-pa: *rang gi bris pa'i gnas bcu'i si thang zhig rten du phul/*, which seems to show it was a certain Chinese style of painting imitated by Tibetan artists. Si-tu Paṇ-chen in a minor work on Chinese long-life symbols used in paintings (collected works, vol. 10, *sna tshogs*, pp. 128ff. [2b-]) mentions with what wonder Tibetan artists received and imitated such Chinese *si thang*: *bod kyi yul 'dir si thang 'byor pa la// dper byas ngo mtshar kho na'i ched du dang//.* On the other hand, a great 15th-century Chinese scroll image called the *dGa' ldan se'u thang* or *dGa' ldan gser thang* was reportedly a "tapestry"—see Y. Tanaka (1994), p. 873. The element *si* originally may well have been the Chinese word *si* "silk." Tibetans nowadays usually understand *si thang* as a woven thangka (cf. the Modern Tibetan term *si btags dngos rdzas* "silk fabrics"), and this has colored the interpretations of both Tibetan and Western scholars down to the present. dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 132, for instance, takes *si thang* to be an etymological translation (*sgra 'gyur*) (i.e. a partial loan-word from Chinese?), whereas the corresponding term as established through a direct translation of the sense (*don 'gyur*) would be *dar thang* ("woven-silk thangka"). He thus seems to take the Chinese word *si* ("silk") to be the equivalent of the Tibetan *dar*. See also A. Chayet (1994), p. 114 and n. 508. I suppose the *dar thang* mentioned by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 37.5 (19a), was a thangka of woven silk: *sangs rgyas yar byon gyi dar thang*. Examples of such woven Chinese (or Tangut?) thangkas from about the late 12th or early 13th century are known to survive. See Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje *et al.* (1985), plates 62 and 102.

[249] The painting apparently depicted the major deeds (*mdzad pa*) of the Buddha, and the spelling *rgya mdzod* "Chinese treasury" is probably incorrect. The painting was probably a depiction of the "hundred deeds" of the Buddha following Chinese models. On the "Hundred Great Deeds" (*mdzad pa brgya*) type of painting, see also G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 354. Tucci mentioned the painting-guide (*bris yig*) by the later master Tāranātha in which the latter described how to depict the story of the Buddha's life in one hundred episodes: *sTon pa shākya dbang po'i mdzad pa brgya pa'i bris yig*. According to Tucci, in a more detailed work—a biography proper—Tāranātha had rearranged the same story into one hundred and twenty-five episodes. One finds them already in the 14th-century murals of Zhwa-lu, here following the plan of Karma-pa Rang-byung-rdo-rje, according to Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 410.4 (*skyes rabs brgya pa karma pa rang byung rdo rje'i bkod pa ltar*). This need not mean that the Karma-pa had actually been present at Zhwa-lu supervising the murals (cf. R. Vitali [1990], p. 107). Rather, it may simply refer to Rang-byung-rdo-rje's *'Khrungs rabs brgya rtsa* collection of Jātaka tales as having been (in Kaḥ-thog Si-tu's opinion) the source for this ordering or even portrayal of the depictions.

[250] sDe-srid, *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya*, vol. 1, p. 582.6. The sDe-srid here describes it as "a picture in the lDan style, which is close to the royal sort" (*rgyal rigs dang nye ba'i ldan lugs kyi ri mo*). Just what the "royal sort" refers to is uncertain, though it may be a reference to a Chinese imperial court style. This seems to be supported by bsTan-pa-rab-brtan (1988?), p. 60, who mentions in another context: "'si-thang' paintings that were [Chinese] imperial [court?] paintings (*rgyal srol ri mo*) of the Ming dynastic period" (*ming rgyal rabs skabs kyi rgyal srol ri mo'i si thang zhes pa*). The phrase *rgyal rigs* has also been sometimes mistaken for "Chinese style" *rgya ris*. Zhu-chen, who edited the Derge blocks of the *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya* (the source of the above quote), in his own account of art quotes the above phrase verbatim (*gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*, p. 149.2). But in the version of Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 106.6, the text has actually been emended to read: "close to the Chinese painting style" (*rgya bris dang nye ba'i*).

[251] On the "lDan-tradition," E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), p. 28, have hypothesized that the word *ldan* here might mean something like "talented" or "gifted." In fact *ldan lugs* in another context does indeed mean something like "[well]-endowed tradition." I refer to the *ldan lugs* ("[correct-measure]-possessing tradition") as the name of a style of correctly proportioned writing or calligraphy mentioned by Gu-ru bKra-shis, p. 1005: *yi ge tshad dang ldan pas na ldan lugs su grags pa.*

[252] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 109.3 (*na* 55a): *phag mo rtser gnas rnying gi si thang las sman thang pas bshus pa'i ston pa'i mdzad thang ri mo bkod pa khyad mtshar*. I am indebted to L. van der Kuijp for this reference.

[253] sMan-thang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub, *bsTan bcos legs bshad*, p. 218: *de ltar rgya gar dang rgya nag bal bod la sogs pa'i ris* [sic] *mo'i lugs gang dang gang 'bri 'dod pa la/ de dang de'i lugs ma lus pa khong du chud cing/ gzhan yang sgra dang/ snyan ngag dang/ lanydza dang/ wartu/ bod kyi yi ge'i rigs mtha' dag la blo'i snang ba thob pa'i ris* [sic] *mo mkhan sman bla don grub kyis las dang po pa rnams la go bde ba'i phyir*

sbyar ba'o//. A similar statement is found in sMan-bla-don-grub's colophon to his famous treatise *bDe bar gshegs pa'i...*, as will be quoted below. See also Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 32.

[254] E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), p. 191, rightly remark concerning the painters at work in Gyantse in about the 1430s: "The full command of the different styles adopted by the Tibetan artistic tradition and the ability to reach a high aesthetic level in each of them became a necessary requisite for the artist as well as a criterion to judge the value of his work."

[255] sMan-thang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub, *bsTan bcos legs bshad*, pp. 177–8: *rgyal ba'i rnam sprul bi shwa karma'i rig gnas mchog// gangs* [p. 178] *ri'i khrod 'dir bde gshegs sku gzugs nyid la ni// tshad dang ldan zhing mkhas mchog dpal 'byor rin chen dang// bsod nams dpal 'byor rgyu skar 'phreng ba de la 'dud// mkhas mchog de rnams kun gyi rjes 'brangs nas//....*

[256] The inscription in this chapel identifies them as follows (Tucci [1941], pt. 2, p. 42): *pir thog rgyal po dpal gnas rnying pa dpon mo che dpal 'byor rin chen pa dang dpon dge bshes bsod nams dpal 'byor.* They are painters nos. 23 and 25 in the above list extracted from Tucci's *Indo-Tibetica*. See now F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), pp. 20, 250 and 290 on dPal-'byor-rin-chen, and pp. 250 and 303 on bSod-nams-dpal-'byor. dGe-bshes bSod-nams-dpal-'byor from gNas-rnying is the only artist mentioned as having painted in temple 5W, a temple devoted to Shākya-thub-pa: the "Nub-phyogs-kyi-gzhal-yas-khang." See also E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), pp. 261 and 412f. Tucci (1941), pt. 2, p. 112 gave the inscription as follows: *dpal gnas rnying pa dpon mo che dge bshes bsod nams dpal 'byor ba.* The similarly named Rin-chen-dpal-'byor painted in chapel 4S2, the mKhyen-rab lha-khang. Though Rin-chen-dpal-'byor and dPal-'byor-rin-chen have been assumed by Tucci and others to be identical, since both were from gNas-rnying and the elements of their names are merely transposed, this would seem to require further proof. Tucci (1941), pt. 1, p. 217, for instance asserted the "remarkable artistic value" of the chapel 4–1 ('Jam-dbyangs-smra-seng lha-khang 4S2) painted by Rin-chen-dpal-'byor of gNas-rnying *and his son*. See also Tucci (1941), pt. 2, p. 70: *gnas rnying pa mkhas pa'i dbang po rin chen dpal 'byor dang de'i sras.* I am indebted to Prof. F. Ricca for discussing these inscriptions with me.

[257] F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), p. 20, quoting 'Jigs-med-grags-pa, pp. 132–141, and the *Myang chos 'byung* (1983 ed.), p. 52.

[258] See E. Lo Bue (1992), p. 570; E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), pp. 412ff.; and F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), p. 23. E. Lo Bue in a personal communication, June 1994, described these murals: "In my opinion that is the finest wall painting in the whole of the Gyantse compound...." The inscription recorded in E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), p. 412, n. 119, states: "These were painted in as fine a manner as possible by the expert painter of gNas-rnying, the master artist dPal-'byor-ba together with his students" (*ri mo mkhas pa gnas rnying pa dpon mo che dpal 'byor ba dpon slob kyis gzabs nas bris so//*). One of the patrons of the murals was likewise a "gNas-rnying dpon-btsun dPal-'byor-rin-chen," possibly the same great monk-artist. These murals are mentioned also in the *Myang chos 'byung* (1983), p. 62. For the date of the murals, see E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), p. 70.

[259] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 394.5 (197b): *ngos bris grub thob brgyad cu shin tu nyams mtshar ba bal bris rnying pa/.* He also found the maṇḍalas here to be very good except that the deities in the eastern direction were painted upsided-own. Apart from that he described them as being in an excellent Bal-bris style with fine gold work, possessing outstanding proportions. See p. 395 (198a).

[260] *Ibid.*, pp. 400.6–401.1 (299b-201a): *nang du sgrub thabs rgya mtsho'i lha phal cher rgyud sde/ bla brgyud sogs tshon mthing spang gnam sngon dang/ li khri sogs me 'bar lta bu snga ma'i bal bris* [201a] *li tshugs las ha cang mdzes pa gtsang gi lha bzo 'gran zla bral ba dag gis bzhengs pas mig gi bdud rtsir snang/.*

[261] 'Jigs-med-grags-pa, p. 166.

[262] See *ibid.*, pp. 241 and 244. He also gives (pp. 240f.) a detailed description of the plan of the great thangka and of the symbolism of its various elements.

[263] E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), p. 27, mention that Gyantse at certain times also exercised political control over Lho-brag, which could also have been a possible factor contributing to sMan-bla-don-grub's going there.

[264] His biography is found in the *gNas rnying chos 'byung*, vol. 2, ff. 41a-46a. His statue flanks that of the Kha-che paṇ-chen Śākyaśrībhadra in chapel 4/10 of the dPal-'khor mchod-rten. See E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), pp. 342f. I am not sure whether he is to be identified with sPos-khang-pa 'Jam-dbyangs-rin-chen-rgyal-mtshan of the same period, though it is certainly possible. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 343. The "*gNas rnying chos 'byung*" is actually the historical compilation: *sKyes bu dam pa rnams kyi rnam par thar pa rin po che'i gter mdzod.* (2 vols., xylograph dating to the 1520s.) The contents of the two volumes are: vol. 1, ff. 1a-17a (A. sTon pa'i byon tshul/ B. Kha ba can rgyal po'i gdung rabs) and vol. 2, ff. 1a-88b (C. gNas rnying gi chags tshul/ D. Bla ma'i byon rim/ and E. dByil gyi gdung rabs). F. Ricca and E. Lo Bue (1993), p. 22, suggest that he was identical with Rin-chen-grub (1403–1452), but this is impossible.

[265] *gNas rnying chos 'byung*, vol. 2, f. 45a: *bzo'i chag tshad/ lha'i gral dkod/ kha rtog gi spel/ gras tshems kyi zhal bkod/ rje rang nyid kyis ji ltar mdzad pa sngar* [=*ltar*?] *bris bzo ba lag len pa rnams kyis zhabs tog bgyis te/ gos sku chen mo 'gro ba yongs kyis mthong thos dran reg gi mig ltos dge ba'i lam po che'i srol* [*b*]*tod cing/.*

[266] *Ibid.*: *ma the ba dpon dpal 'byor rin chen dang/ dbon* [or: *dpon*?] *bkra shis mgon bris gras la mkhas pa du ma zhig bsags nas/*. Ma-the may have been the name of an estate or village in the upper Myang valley. Other great artists from the place or family are mentioned in vol. 2 of the *gNas rnying chos 'byung:* (f. 56a) in ca. 1472 murals were painted by Ma-the-ba dpon dPal-'byor and also by Legs-pa-byang-chub; (f. 56a-b) in about the same period during the making of a large brocade appliqué image of Maitreya with fifteen deities, Ma-the-ba dpon dPal-'byor was in charge of sketching; (f. 63a) in ca. the year 1496 the ri-mo-ba dpon-mo-che Ma-the-ba uncle and nephew, and lha-ris-pa Legs-pa were there painting murals; and (f. 72b) in 1504 dpon-mo-che Ma-the-ba Legs-pa-byang-chub was doing the planning and sketching for a great Amitābha brocade appliqué thangka with seven deities. Elsewhere (f. 49a) the famous statue-makers La-stod dpon-mo-che bKra-shis-rin-chen (who made a gilt image of the Buddha in ca. 1452) and (f. 56a) Lha-bzo-ba Rin-bsam (active in 1472) are also mentioned. As mentioned above in connection with the Byang-bdag, bKra-shis-rin-chen about ten years later was invited by dGe-'dun-grub-pa to Tashilhunpo, but he was not released by Thang-stong-rgyal-po.

[267] This no doubt refers to the mission of Rab-brtan-kun-bzang-'phags to the Chinese court in 1413. At that time the abbot of gNas-rnying was said to have received the rank of *gu-shri*. See the *Chronicles of Gyantse* as translated by G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 665.

[268] Cong-rdo may have been the old Yüan name for Zhongdu, one of the capital cities near Beijing, as I was kindly informed by Mr. L. van der Kuijp.

[269] *gNas rnying chos 'byung*, vol. 2, f. 45b: *yang rje nyid kyi rab dkar gyi snyan pa rgya nag rgyal po'i snyan du grags pa la rten nas chen po dngos grub rin chen pas/ rgya nag chos kyi rgyal po'i bka' dang du blangs nas rgya nag cong rdor byon ste/ gnas rnying mkhan po brgyud par bcas pa la/ sa chen dbang bsgyur shel gyi dam kha/ 'ja' sa mnga' ris kyi gnang sbyin dang/ lag rtags dang/ gos phyi nang dang bcas pa gnang ba blangs nas phul te/ rje nyid kyi phrin las kyi mthu dpal lo//.* On this mission to the Ming court, see also G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 665, who quotes the "Chronicles of Gyantse," f. 18a.

[270] This is a large Chinese painting of a standing Buddha Śākyamuni with Tibetan and Chinese inscriptions to left and right which survives as one of the monastery's great treasures, as I was first informed by Mr. H. Neumann in London, 1994. The painting is devoid of any landscape in the background. According to its description in a brief article by the investigation team of the Cultural Relics Management Committee of Tibet (1991), the painting is 2.5 by 1.3 meters in size and bears a Chinese inscription dating it to the 17th day of the 4th month of the Emperor Yongle's 10th year of reign (i.e. to the year 1412).

[271] This temple, founded in the early Phyi-dar period, was visited by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, pp. 388–391 (194b-196a). The latter mentions twice (pp. 389.4 and 391.5) damage caused by the "foreign army" (*phyi gling dmag*), i.e. by the Younghusband Expedition (1904). For a mention of the monastery, see also E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), p. 68.

[272] See sMan-thang-pa, *bDe bar gshegs pa'i*, and Zhu-chen, *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*, p. 149.4. Tucci evidently found one or two fragments of this work. See Tucci (1949), vol. 1, pp. 293f., nos. 4 and 5. It is also listed by A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho, p. 584, MHTL no. 13065. A 1675 Zhol par-khang edition existed of this work and of 'Phreng-kha-ba's treatise on the proportions of stūpas, with a colophon composed by the 5th Dalai Lama. See also the 5th Dalai Lama's autobiography, *Za hor gyi ban de* (1989–91 ed.), vol. 2, p. 522, which mentions his sponsoring this new edition: *sman bla don grub pas mdzad pa'i sku gzugs cha tshad dang sprul sku nga la gzigs kyis mdzad pa'i mchod rten gyi thig rtsa dang bcas pa'i par gsar bskrun rnams 'byor/.* New blocks based on the previous edition were carved in 1927 at Gangs-can-phan-bde'i-gter-mdzod-gling under the sponsorship of the dGa'-ldan pho-brang. See below, Appendix I. For references to the Zhol edition, see also Lokesh Chandra (1959), no. 82: *sman bla don grub kyis mdzad pa'i bde bar gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rab byed dang/....* (This edition in 30 folios also included at the end a work by 'Phreng-kha-ba on the proportions of stūpas.)

[273] See the colophon as it appears in Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 32: *rang gi dbus gtsang gi slob ma mtha' dag gis bskul ba'i tshe/ phyogs 'di dag la nan tan du bya zhing/ rgya gar nag/ bod bal po la sogs pa'i ri mo'i ring lugs gang dang gang 'bri bar 'dod pa la de dang de'i gnas lugs ma lus pa khong du chud cing/ gzhan yang/ sgra dang/ snyan ngag dang/ sdeb sbyor dang/ lānytsha dang/ wartu la dang/ nā ga ra dang/ dha ri ka dang/ bod kyi yi ge'i rigs mtha' dag la sogs pa la blo gros kyi snang ba cung zad tsam thob pa'i ri mo ba sman bla don grub kyis gtsang nyang stod kyi sa char ched du byas pa las/ gtsang rong 'bras yul rdzong dkar du legs par grub pa'o//.*

[274] Dalai bla-ma V, *Zab pa dang*, vol. 1, pp. 38f. For more on the 16th-century sMan-ris artist 'Phreng-kha-ba, see below, Chapter 6.

[275] sDe-srid, *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya*, vol. 1, p. 582.6.

[276] bKras dgon lo rgyus rtsom 'bri tshogs chung (1992), pp. 21–22, states that the wood for building Tashilhunpo was brought on yak-back from Gur-ma and some was transported along the Myang-chu River from such places in the upper Myang valley as gNas-rnying and dPal-'khor-bde-chen. According to *ibid.*, p. 25, the dimensions of the main assembly hall were 23.6 m. (east-west) by 18.8 m. (north-south). This main hall was supported by forty-eight pillars.

[277] Ye-shes-rtse-mo, p. 261: *pir thogs rgyal po dpon mo che sman thang pa dpon slob kyis gtsug lag khang gi ldebs chen*

gnyis la/ rgyal ba rdo rje 'chang la grub chen brgyad bcus bskor ba dang/ thub pa chen po la 'phags pa'i gnas brtan bcu drug gis bskor ba'i zhing khams gnyis kyi ri mo rdzogs pa dang/ mdzad bcu'i zhing bkod chen mo'i skya ris rnams mdzad cing/ khyad par rgyal ba rdo rje 'chang chos 'chad du mdzad pa yang rten 'brel khyad par can gyi phyir mdzad do//. The whole fourth chapter of dGe-'dun-grub's biography (pp. 248–81) mainly has to do with the sacred objects commissioned by this master, and it is entitled: *gTso bor sku gsung thugs kyi rten bzhengs las brtsam pa'i rim par phye ba ste bzhi pa'o/.* Could dpon-mo-che bSam-gtan-pa have been Bo-dong paṇ-chen's greatest artist disciple mNga'-ris-pa bSam-gtan-rgyal-mtshan? In this period dGe-'dun-grub-pa was patronizing other outstanding artists from La-stod Byang and western gTsang.

[278] *Ibid.*, p. 271: *de nas shing pho spre'u'i lo la ... gtsug lag khang gi rgya mdzad chen mo'i ri mo mdzad dgos rnams kyang dpon mo che sman thang pas legs par mdzad pa yin no//.* As mentioned above, a "rGya-mdzad chen-mo" was a detailed Chinese-style (*rgya*) depiction of the main deeds (*mdzad pa*) of the Buddha. The term has in the meantime fallen out of use. This painting work was perhaps the completion of the murals he had already sketched of the Twelve Great Deeds (*mdzad bcu'i zhing bkod chen mo*), as mentioned above. Note that here *mdzad bcu* is short for *mdzad pa bcu gnyis*, just as *gnas bcu* is short for *gnas brtan bcu drug*. Such themes were the subject also for many later murals at Tashilhunpo. The People's Fine Arts Publishing House, China, ed. (1982), *Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals*, p. 155, even estimated that the monastery in recent times contains about 212 square meters of "Jātaka" murals!

[279] Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs (1985), p. 83, quoting the *gTsang bkra shis lhun po'i lo rgyus*, mentions the following from among sMan-thang-pa's paintings there: *gtsug lag khang gi byang gi ldebs chen gnyis la rgyal ba rdo rje 'chang thugs kar chos 'chad du mdzad pa la grub chen brgyad [b]cus bskor ba dang/ thub pa chen po la gnas brtan bcu drug gis bskor ba/ tsong kha pa yab sras/ nub ngos su thub pa'i mdzad bcu/ byang ngos su g.yu lo bkod pa'i zhing khams dang 'dod lha sna tshogs/ gzhung sgo'i thad kyi ka ba gnyis la khro bo mi g.yo ba dang/ rta mgrin gyi ri mo rnams sman thang pa chen mos bris....* Thus the paintings of Vajradhara surrounded by the Eighty Adepts and of the Buddha Śākyamuni surrounded by the Sixteen Elders each formed one great mural (*ldebs chen*) on the hall's northern wall. The Twelve Great Deeds were depicted on the western wall. bKras dgon lo rgyus rtsom 'bri tshogs chung (1992), pp. 31f., also refers to a mural of Green Tārā attributed to dGe-'dun-grub-pa in the sGrol-ma'i-lha-khang.

[280] Ye-shes-rtse-mo, p. 275: *lhag pa'i lhas rgyud byin gyis brlabs pa'i pir thogs rnams kyi rgyal po sman bla don grub pa dpon slob spyan drangs te bzo'i rtsom pa mdzad/ de tsam gyi gos rnams kyang sngar byung ba dang/ de nas rgyun ma chad par 'bul mi byung ba la brten nas ring por ma thogs par zla ba gsum la dkyus su 'dom bco brgyad dang/ zheng du 'dom bcu gnyis kyi tshad dang ldan pa'i sku bzang zhing mtshar chags byin rlabs dang ldan pa yongs su rdzogs par grub ste/ gos sku 'di'i thugs ka na rje rang nyid kyis mdzad pa'i bstan pa rgyas pa'i smon lam gyi tshig mang po bris nas bzhugs la/ .... khyad par 'di'i skya ris dgon pa'i mdun gyi ne thang du btab pa'i tshe sku ji tsam zhig 'ong ba blta ba'i phyir mdun gyi dar rgyas pa'i spe dkar chen po 'di'i logs la 'grams par mdzad pa la dpon mo ches phyag gi lhung gzed yan chad rdzogs pa 'ong zhes dang/ gzhan dag gis sku tshad thams cad rdzogs pa 'ong zhus te bkram pas zhal gyi dkyil 'khor rdzogs pa tsam zhig byung ba la/ dpon slob thams cad bzhad gad theg pa zhig byung zhing de'i tshe rje'i zhal nas/ rten 'brel legs/.*

[281] bKras dgon lo rgyus rtsom 'bri tshogs chung (1992), p. 33, also refers to sMan-thang-pa's works in the rGyal-chen lha-khang.

[282] Ye-shes-rtse-mo, pp. 275–6: *de ltar grub pa'i lhag gos yug bcu lhag tsam la rje btsun ma'i gos sku zhig bzhengs gsung/ ....* [p. 276] *gos sku'i bzo rnams brtsams/ de'i ngang nas gtsug lag khang gi sgo khang du rgyal po chen po bzhi'i bzo'i rtsom pa yang mdzad cing/ .... de nas rje btsun ma'i gos sku mchur 'dom brgyad dang/ zheng du 'dom drug gi tshad dang ldan pa/ rgyu bzang zhing byin rlabs kyi gzi 'od 'phro ba dang bcas pa yongs su* [p. 277] *rdzogs pa myur du grub ste/ .... rgyal chen gyi sku rnams dang rgyal chen lha khang gi phyogs kyi cha rnams la phyogs skyong bco lnga dang/ gnod sbyin gyi sde dpon bcu gnyis kyi sku'i ri mo lha bzo stobs po che dang/ dpon mo che sman thang pa zhes bya bas legs par grub ste/.*

[283] Kun-dga'-grol-mchog, *Paṇḍi ta*, p. 132.1: *rje btsun 'jam dkar bris thang sman bla don grub pa'i gzabs bris ma chung chung zhig yod pa'i drung du mchod pa gsar pa re bshams/....* One of the later sMan-thang-pa family members (referred to as sprul-sku or nang-pa sMan-thang-pa) served as a source for Kun-dga'-grol-mchog when the latter was compiling the biography of Shākya-mchog-ldan. See *ibid.*, pp. 120.1 and 171.6. Elsewhere the same work makes passing references to nang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub, sMan-thang-pa or works by them. See p. 177.4: *sprul sku bi shwa karma'i ngo bor gyur pa nang pa sman bla don grub;* p. 213: *sman thang pa*; and p. 225.5.

[284] Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, vol. 1, p. 621.5 (*da* 311b). The 5th Dalai Lama's history, *Gangs can yul*, pp. 214–5, and G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 642, erroneously give the date 1490 for the founding of Yangs-pa-can. This is highly unlikely since the founding is not mentioned in the corresponding passage of the biography of the monastery's founder given by Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, which was based on the Zhwa-dmar's autobiography, but it is mentioned in the passage referring to 1503 (after the detailed account based on the autobiography ends, to be sure). Indeed, 1503 is also given as the foundation year of both Yangs-pa-can and Thub-bstan-chos-'khor in Lhasa in the chronological tables of the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, vol. 3, p. 3253.

[285] Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, vol. 1, p. 621.5 (*da* 311b): *de nas yangs can du rten chen gtso 'khor rnams bzhengs pa dang/ zhwa dmar cod pan 'dzin pa na rim gyi gser sku sku tshad ma/ mgon khang du kar lugs dang thel pa'i chos skyong gi sku/ steng 'og thams cad du ri mo'i bkod pa khyad mtshar sman thang pa sman bla don grub yab sras dang mkhyen brtse bas bris/.*

[286] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 107, cites Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, vol. 1, p. 621.5 (*da* 311b). In a subsequent passage he then refers to sMan-thang-pa 'Jam-dbyangs-pa, presumably the son of sMan-bla-don-grub. But murals reputedly by sMaṇ-bla-don-grub himself were viewed by Si-tu Paṇ-chen at Yangs-pa-can in 1714. See Si-tu, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 42.3 (*a* 21b).

[287] Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 5: *'du khang chen mo'i skya zhal sdebs chen gnyis la/ pir thogs kyi rgyal po dpon mo che lho brag sman thang pa'i phyag bris/ rgyal ba rdo rje 'chang la grub chen brgyad bcus bskor ba dang mnyam med thub pa chen po la gnas brtan bcu drug gis bskor ba/ ston pa sangs rgyas mdzad bcu'i ldebs bris sogs khyad chos dang/ ngo mtshar bsam brjod las 'das pa de rnams da lta skyes bu'i bsod nams kyi zhing du bzhugs zhing/.* Three illustrations of episodes from the Buddha's Great Deeds based on old Chinese models and painted by the assured hand of a great master have been published in People's Fine Arts Publishing House, ed. (1982), *Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals* (pp. 66 and 68f.). They are also probably from Tashilhunpo. Possibly they have some connection with the original 15th-century depictions of such themes in the main assembly hall by sMan-bla-don-grub. Interestingly, two slightly different paintings of the same episode, both based on one and the same model, have been published. See *ibid.*, p. 69, pl. 56, and Liu Lizhong (1988), *Buddhist Art of the Tibetan Plateau*, p. 177, pl. 320. (The caption in the latter book is wrong.) These paintings too give the impression of some age, though they would seem to postdate sMan-thang-pa. Could they date to the 17th century and the period of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho?

[288] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 310.4 (155b): *yang sman bla don grub gnas brtan nyer gnyis sogs yod.*

[289] Dalai bla-ma V, *Zab pa dang*, vol.1, p. 39.1. But one must be cautious with this name since sMan-bla-don-grub himself was referred to as an emanation of "'Jam-pa'i-dbyangs" (Mañjuśrī), and hence might also be called sMan-thang-pa "'Jam-dbyangs-pa."

[290] Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, vol. 1, p. 621.7 (*da* 311b): *mdun gyi ne'u thang la gos sku'i tshad kyi ras bkram pa'i steng du sman thang 'jam dbyangs pas za 'og gi lham gyon/ sol pir yu ba can phyag tu thogs pas thub chen gyi sku bris te tshon yig btab nas ji lta bar gos chen kha dog so so dras nas bsgrigs* [312a] *pa'i gos sku shin tu che ba bsgrubs te rab gnas la sogs pa'i dus su ngo mtshar gyi ltas mang du byung skad/ gos sku chen po 'di lta bur thig 'debs sogs mi dgos par 'ol spyis bris pa'i lan cig las spo len sogs ma dgos pas bzo bo mkhas pa'i phul dang rje nyid kyi thugs rje gcig tu 'jug pa'o//.*

[291] *Ibid.*, p. 569.5 (*da* 285b): *sman thang 'jam dbyangs pa sogs ci 'di rmi lam mam mig 'phrul yin nam/ ....*

[292] Padma-dkar-po, *Sems dpa' chen po ... thugs rje chen po'i zlos gar*, vol. 1, pp. 521.5 (*ga nya* 94a) refers to building work and paintings at rGyal-byed-tshal. This was cited by Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 107: *bsam grub rtser sku mdun zhing gis 'bod mir sman thang pa 'jam dbyangs dpal brdzang byung/.* In Padma-dkar-po's Collected Works, vol. 3, pp. 415–6 (*nya ga* 41a-b), there is a reference to the painting of another thangka.

[293] Kun-dga'-grol-mchog, *Paṇḍi ta*, p. 170.3: *sprul sku sman thang pa yab sras mched bcas kyis skya ris btab pa'i nyin mo me tog gi char sim pa zhig babs shing/.*

[294] *Ibid.*, p. 172.6: *chu pho byi ba la gtsug lag khang dang 'du khang sogs kyi gyeng ris rnams sman thang pa yab sras rnams kyis bsgrubs te/ mdo bkod dang ltung bshags kyi sangs rgyas so lnga/ sman bla'i bde gshegs 'khor bcas sogs sangs rgyas byang sems 'ba'* [87a] *zhig las/ phyis ji ltar 'byung yang mi nges so gsung/ bla ma'i sku sogs kyi rnam pa gang yang 'bri ba bkas ma gnang zhing/....* Cf. *ibid.*, p. 211.2, which mentions that Shākya-mchog-ldan in 1506 when commissioning some Lam-'bras lineage statues related how in Glo-bo later sectarianism led to the washing off at Glo-bo sTeng-chen of the murals depicting the life story of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen. Some local people of Mustang had spread about the baseless rumor that Bo-dong Paṇ-chen had been a rebirth of Klu-dkar-rgyal. This act of sectarian vandalism was deeply regretted by Shākya-mchog-ldan.

[295] See the biography of Shākya-mchog-ldan by Kun-dga'-grol-mchog, *Paṇḍi ta*, p. 189.4, in Shākya-mchog-ldan, Collected Works, vol. 16. See also the biography of Shākya-mchog-ldan by Shākya-rin-chen, *Gangs can gyi shing rta*, Collected Works, vol. 4, p. 372.4, for the parallel reference to the painting of murals of protective deities by sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa in the Paṇ-chen's sixty-eighth year. See also *ibid.*, pp. 268.3 and 347.1, for references to a painting of a maṇḍala by Paṇ-chen Byams-pa-gling-pa dPal-ldan-tshul-khrims that was said to have amazed even sMan-thang-pa. Shākya-rin-chen, p. 209.1, refers to Shākya-mchog-ldan's own effortless mastery of painting while in Yar-rgyab. It is interesting to note that a brief manual on iconometry by Shākya-rin-chen also survives, in which he explicitly states twice that he had based himself on the tradition of sMan-bla-don-grub: *Sangs rgyas byang sems kyi sku gzugs kyi cha tshad tsam bkod pa rmongs pa'i mig 'byed*, pp. 281 and 301.

[296] Kun-dga'-grol-mchog, *Paṇḍi ta*, p. 192.5.

[297] *Ibid.*, p. 225.

[298] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 106.

[299] Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, vol. 1, p. 606.4 (*da* 304a): *de tshe sku mkhar la zhabs tog ches ngan par gzigs te skyes mchog gzim spyil du skyes mchog 'khor bcas dang sngags*

sku rnams sman thang pa zhi ba 'od la 'brir 'jug pa'i bka' stsal pa grub zin pa'i rab gnas mdzad....

[300] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 42.2 (*na* 21b): *sprul sku sman thang pa sogs la dbu ma'i lta 'khrid dang....*

[301] Kun-dga'-grol-mchog, *rNam thar yang rgyan nor bu'i phra bkod*, vol. 2, p. 598.3 (*cha* 7b): *mar lam sprul sku sman thang pa'i sras po sman tshe ba gshegs 'dug pa'i tshugs gsol mjal tsam byas/.* This seems to have taken place in the early 1540s, at the time of a widespread smallpox epidemic, soon after the dge-slong ordination of the Zhwa-dmar. The following passage mentions Newar artisans: *bal po rnams gser mdog can na yod pa la/ mkha' 'gro rgya mtsho'i sku bzo ba la yongs dgos pa'i bka' lung bsgyur cang dang dpon mo che la/....* There are numerous other mentions of the Newar artisans (*bal po rnams*) working under Kun-dga'-grol-mchog's patronage in subsequent years. See for example: pp. 606.4, 609.1, 619.2, 628.1, 628.5 and 634.3.

[302] Klong-chen-pa, *Theg pa'i mchog rin po che'i mdzod*, Gung-thang (Kun-gsal sGang-po-che) xylograph edition (filmed by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project), f. *ka* 508b: *le lha'i ri mo sprul sku sman thang pa'i// brgyud 'dzin mkhas pa'i 'byung gnas gung thang pa// mkhas pa dri med sor mo'i sgyu rtsal lo//.* Also according to Lha-rtse sGang-zur Dar-rgyas (b. 1931), Bodhnath, 1995, in western gTsang ("stod," La-stod, and also including the Sherpa region), the term *mkhas pa* was the title for an artist, much like *dpon* was for artists in Ladakh and some other places. This has become in some cases a family name, as in "Ding-ri mkhas-pa" and "Khum-chung mkhas-pa." Some families with this name have given up their occupation as artists, but they still retain "mkhas-pa" in their names. See also Ratna Kumar Rai (1994), p. 40, for instances of the use of the term.

[303] *'Brom ston pa*, vol. 2, p. 658: *le lha'i dpe ris mang yul gung thang pa// mkhas pa dri med mkhas pa chos dpal dang// mkhas pa smon lam sogs kyis gzabs nas bris//.*

[304] Personal communication, Seattle, 1980. This was later attested by the biography of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen.

[305] See *'Brom ston pa*, vol. 2, p. 606.3: *me pho rta yi lo.*

[306] See *ibid.*: *chos kyi rgyal po kun bzang nyi zla'i mtshan//....* On this ruler see Kaḥ-thog rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu, *Bod rje lha btsad po'i gdung rabs* (Gangs can rig mdzod ed.), pp. 135–138.

[307] See *'Brom ston pa*, vol. 2, p. 605.1 (303a): *le lha'i dpe ris mkhas pa dpal chen dang// gtsang pa bsod nams 'od zer sogs kyis bris//.*

[308] Kun-dga'-grol-mchog, *Paṇḍi ta,* p. 200.4, sketches the history of the early printing of Shākya-mchog-ldan's works. Many of the minor works were printed in the year 1500. The same source states, p. 126, that Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan acted as secretary/scribe (*yi ge pa*) to Shākya-mchog-ldan until the latter's seventy-seventh year (=1504).

[309] For a description of this edition which evidently dates to the 1420s, see D. Jackson (1989b), p. 6.

[310] On this edition, which probably dates to either 1429 or 1441, see D. Jackson (1988), introduction, pp. xvi-xvii.

[311] For an earlier description of this print and its colophon, see D. Jackson (1990a), p. 115, n. 3. This first print is preserved in the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, class. no. *kha* 3, 13?. I am indebted to Mr. Gyatso Tsering and to the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala, for providing a photocopy of this print and enlargements of its illustrations.

[312] This second print is LTWA class. no. *kha* 3, 12, acc. no. 2508. I am indebted to Mr. Gyatso Tsering and to the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala, for helping me obtain copies of it, too.

[313] See also G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 665, where in the *Gyantse Chronicles*, f. 17a, his name is given as "Kun-tu-bzang." In the colophon there is mentioned that the blocks were carved for, among other reasons, the longevity and increase of the dominion of the king Kun-bzang and his brother, father and son: *chos rgyal kun bzang sku mched yab sras kyi// sku tshe chab srid mkha' dang snyoms gyur cig//.* The colophon also mentions a certain "Ras-snga rnam-rgyal lha-yi-pho-brang."

[314] See *ibid.*, p. 666, quoting from the *Gyantse Chronicles*, f. 33a.

[315] The colophon mentions them as: *skos la mkhas pa snyan pa'i grags thob pa// mon mo rdo ra spun dang pha bu yis//.*

[316] See D. Jackson (1989b), p. 10.

[317] On the illustrations of deities in this edition, see Y. Imaeda (1977).

Chapter 4

mKhyen-brtse of Gong-dkar and His Tradition

Another outstanding artist of the mid 15th century whose genius influenced the later development of Tibetan painting styles was the master artist mKhyen-brtse (*mkhyen brtse chen mo*).[318] According to the *dPyad don tho chung* of the 13th Karma-pa bDud-'dul-rdo-rje, mKhyen-brtse preceded the great sMan-thang-pa and was in fact responsible for establishing the first excellent Tibetan style.[319] But mKhyen-brtse could not have antedated sMan-bla-don-grub by more that a few years, for—if longstanding tradition is to be believed—the two were contemporaries. In fact, according to the sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, both artists had studied under the same master painter, rDo-pa bKra-shis-rgyal-po.[320]

mKhyen-brtse was from Gong-dkar sGang-stod (said to be located just outside the monastic precincts of the monastery Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan), south of Lhasa in Lho-kha district of dBus. The paintings for which he was best known were executed near his birthplace at that same Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan monastery, in or within a few years after 1464–65, under the direction of the monastery's founder, Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan-pa Kun-dga'-rnam-rgyal (1432–1496).[321] Up until the 1960s, many of his murals survived there, such as his depiction of the *Kalpalatā* (*dPag bsam 'khri shing*) Avadāna cycle on the outer walls of the original main assembly hall, and the paintings of deities of all the tantric classes in the upstairs chapel dedicated to Hevajra (Kyai-rdor-khang).[322] A few of the murals miraculously survive in good condition even today, but most have been covered by a layer of whitewash or were otherwise damaged during the Cultural Revolution. Many that were painted over could still probably be restored through careful work by experts, though some overhasty attempts at scrubbing off the coats of whitewash have already resulted in irreparable damage to the paintings below.[323]

mKhyen-brtse executed not only wonderful murals but also special thangkas for his patron the lama Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan-pa. One source records that late one night during his meditations, the lama saw a vision of the protective deity Mahākāla Gur-gyi-mgon-po and immediately afterward made a small drawing of the deity as it had appeared before him. On the following morning, he gave mKhyen-brtse the sketch (a small one since no large supports could be found in the middle of the night), and the great artist then completed it with colors, and this painting became treasured as a very sacred object. Later Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan-pa used this image in the giving of empowerments when his student the chief attendant (*nye gnas chen mo*) brGya-sbyin-pa became ill. For a while it was kept by the latter to ward off harm, and later it remained for many years as the main sacred image in the shrine at rNam-rgyal-rab-brtan, a private estate (of brGya-sbyin-pa?).[324]

In addition to his mastery of painting, mKhyen-brtse was also famed as an extraordinarily skilled sculptor. The chapels of Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan contained many large statues that he had made, some of them reaching the height of

Fig. 73. Cemetery scene from mGon-khang steng-ma, Gong-dkar. Photograph Marilyn Kennell.

from one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half stories. His images of fierce protectors were wonderfully terrifying,[325] and his sculptures of the *Lam 'bras* lineage gurus were both extremely realistic and remarkably well preserved, remaining "as if freshly varnished" down until the 1920s and later.[326] Not a trace remains of any of these figures. All the statues at Gong-dkar were annihilated and the top-floor temples were razed in the 1960s when the monastery's main assembly hall was converted into a grain warehouse and one upper story was preserved for use mainly as Communist party offices.

The few other known sites of mKhyen-brtse's paintings were also in dBus, especially in Lho-kha district south of Lhasa, in the side valleys to the south of the gTsang-po River east of Gong-dkar. For instance, some of the murals within the great stūpa of Grwa Byams-pa-gling begun by Byams-pa-gling-pa bSod-nams-rnam-rgyal (1400–1475) and finished by Lo-tsā-ba bSod-nams-rgya-mtsho (1424–1482) were attributed to mKhyen-brtse.[327]



Fig. 72. Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan-pa Kun-dga'-rnam-rgyal. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 1057.

Fig. 74. Cemetery scene from mGon-khang steng-ma, Gong-dkar. Photograph M. Kennell.

At Grwa lDing-po-che, a large thangka of the bKa'-brgyud-pa lineage masters said to have been by his hand was also mentioned in the pilgrimage record of Kaḥ-thog Si-tu.[328]

mKhyen-brtse is furthermore named as one of the main artists who participated in the painting of the murals of Yangs-pa-can (northwest of Lhasa) in about 1506, though this account by 'Be-lo is not based on the 4th Zhwa-dmar's autobiography.[329] In any case, mKhyen-brtse definitely flourished in the 1460s and probably through much of the second half of the 15th century.

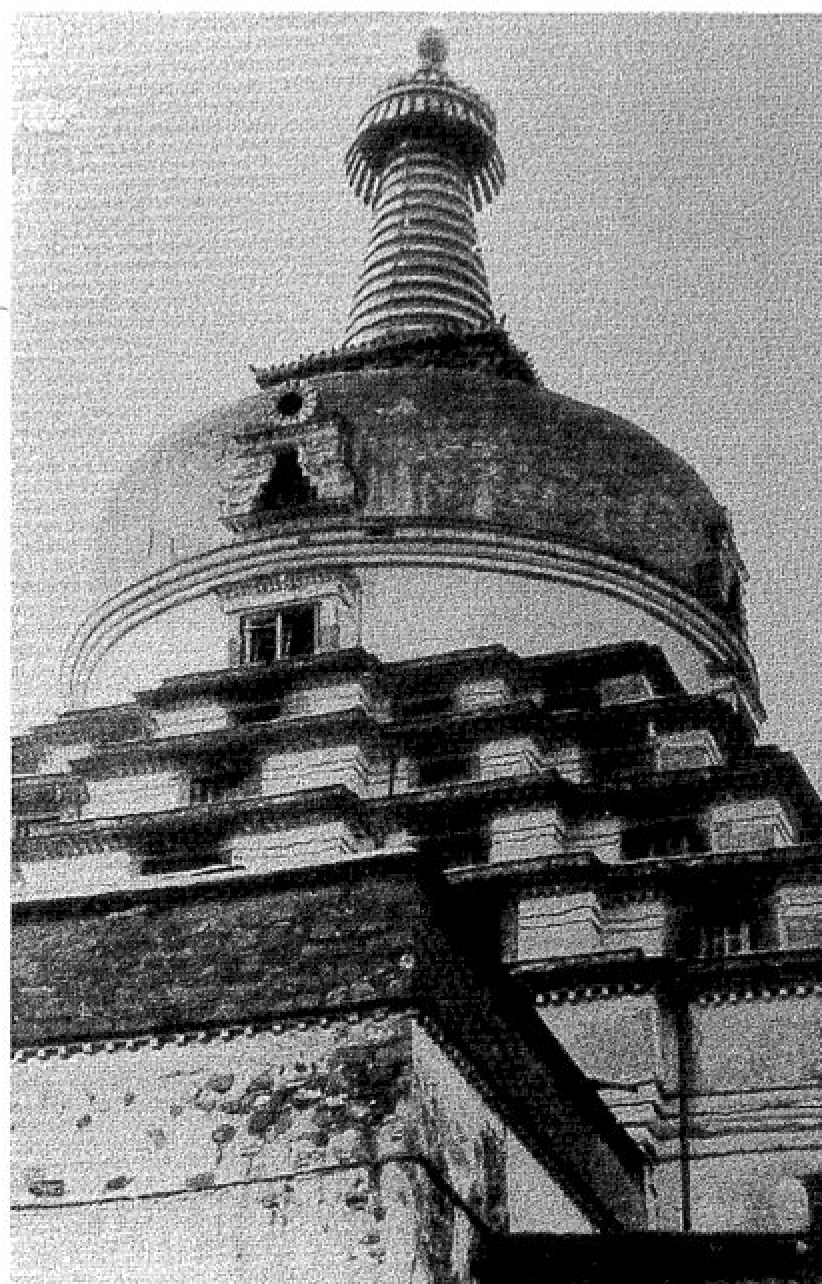


Fig. 75. The great stūpa of Byams-pa-gling. After Tucci, To Lhasa and Beyond (Rome, 1956), facing p. 86.

Characteristics of mKhyen-brtse's Style

The painting style developed by mKhyen-brtse was called the mKhyen-ris ("the style of mKhyen-[brtse]"). This tradition is said to have incorporated some Chinese influences, but evidently not to the same extent that the sMan-ris had.[330] In the opinion of the 13th Karma-pa, the (original) mKhyen-ris style differed in a technical aspect from the sMan-ris: mKhyen-ris artists are said to have used thicker colors than the old sMan-ris painters did (as well as being less expressive). Furthermore, he stated that the mKhyen-ris excelled in particular in the depiction of tantric deities.[331]

A special link between the mKhyen-ris and the Sa-skya-pa school would also not be surprising to find, given the close relationship between mKhyen-brtse and the great master of Sa-skya-pa tantric ritual, Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan-pa Kun-dga'-rnam-rgyal.[332] The greatest mKhyen-ris paintings for later generations were, in fact, the murals of Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan monastery, a religious center that was also famous for its cultivation of other branches of tantric ritual including music and dance. mKhyen-brtse's sculpted images, too, were definitely much appreciated by subsequent generations of Sa-skya-pa masters: for instance, when the great sNgags-'chang Kun-dga'-rin-chen (1517–1584), twenty-fourth throne-holder of Sa-skya, commissioned an image of mGon-po (in connection with his restorations at Sa-skya, begun in 1576?), the main artist was the Gong-dkar sprul-sku sByin-pa-rnam-rgyal, who pitched his tent in the *thig-khang* of the Lha-khang-chen-mo.[333] And when Kun-dga'-rin-chen's son sNgags-'chang Grags-pa-blo-gros (1563–1617) built at Sa-skya the bDud-'dul-sbug dedicated to the protector mGon-po Gur and his retinue, he is said to have had the figures of the main images modelled after those by mKhyen-brtse in the mGon-khang at Gong-dkar.[334]

In painting, too, even as late as the 17th century a discerning patron might request that thangkas of maṇḍalas and wrathful figures be done in the mKhyen-ris style. Such was the request of the 5th Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho (1617–1682)—a practicer of numerous Sa-skya-pa tantric lineages in general who had, moreover, many links to the tradition of Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan-pa in particular—when he commissioned a complicated set of thangkas of the *rDo rje 'phreng ba* (*Vajrāvalī*) cycle.[335] (He also ordered that for the same set of thangkas the peaceful deities be done in the sMan-ris manner, as will be described below in more detail.)

The mKhyen-ris was not, however, exclusively associated with either the Sa-skya-pa school or with any specific subject matter. mKhyen-brtse himself painted murals or thangkas for patrons from more than one religious tradition, and later artists who painted in his style likewise produced paintings of various subjects. At mTshur-phu for instance, a twenty-three-painting set depicting the Sixteen Elders in an Indian manner was preserved, the result of four years and seven months' toil by the mKhyen-ris painter Kong-po A-bo-ba. The same monastery also seems to have preserved another twenty-three-painting set by a mKhyen-bris artist named 'Brug-stod Nor-bu.[336] Another set of twenty-three very fine mKhyen-ris thangkas, with green borders, was kept at sNe-gdong Ban-gtsang, and these paintings had formerly been the sacred possessions of the sNe-gdong ruler.[337] A series of thangkas at sMin-grol-gling is said to have depicted the lineage gurus of the rDzogs-chen tradition in the mKhyen-ris style.[338]

Early and Later Followers

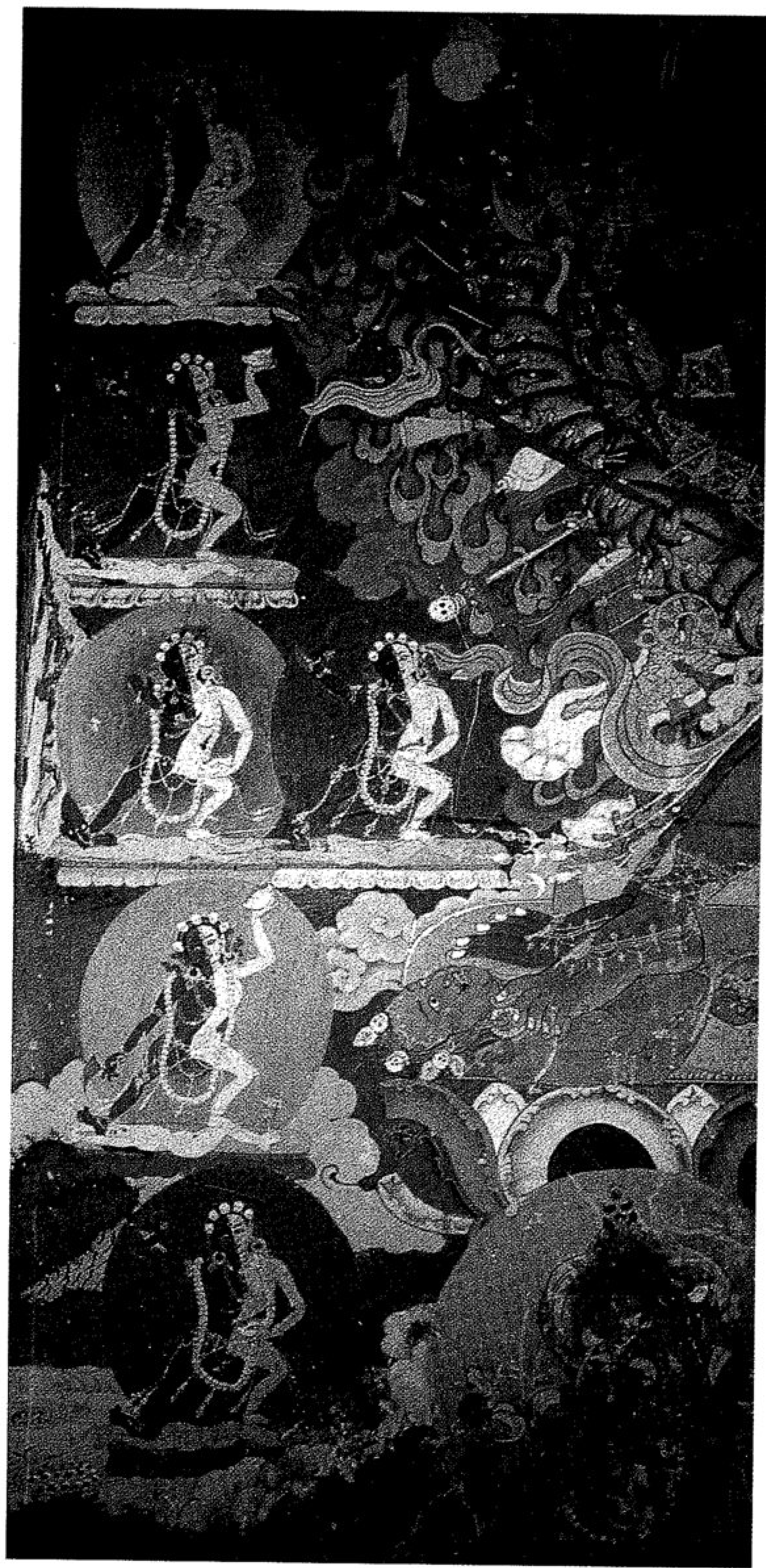
One of mKhyen-brtse's 16th-century followers, who would seem to have been a nephew or great-nephew of his, is mentioned in the writings of 'Brug-chen Padma-dkar-po (1527–1592). The colophon to Padma-dkar-po's treatise on the classification of sacred images states that he composed the work at the request of the mKhyen-brtse dbon-po Tshe-dbang-kun-mkhyen.[339] A nephew of mKhyen-brtse from Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan is also mentioned in Padma-dkar-po's autobiography as having approached the latter for clarification regarding a Tantric passage or passages. Padma-dkar-po fulfilled his wishes by resolving his doubts.[340]



Pl. 10. Hevajra. Mural in the Kye-rdor-khang, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph D. Jackson, 1986. Some of these murals from the upper yi-dam (Kye-rdor) chapel, Gong-dkar, were published in Sun Zhenhua (1991), plates 93-99.



Pl. 11. Yi-dam Deity (sGyu-ma-chen-mo, Mahāmāyā?). Detail of a mural in the Kye-rdor-khang, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph D. Jackson, 1986.



Pl. 12. Ḍākiṇīs. Detail of a mural in the Kye-rdor-khang, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph D. Jackson, 1986.



Pl. 13. Buddhakapāla (Sangs-rgyas-thod-pa). Mural in the Kye-rdor-khang, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph D. Jackson, 1986.



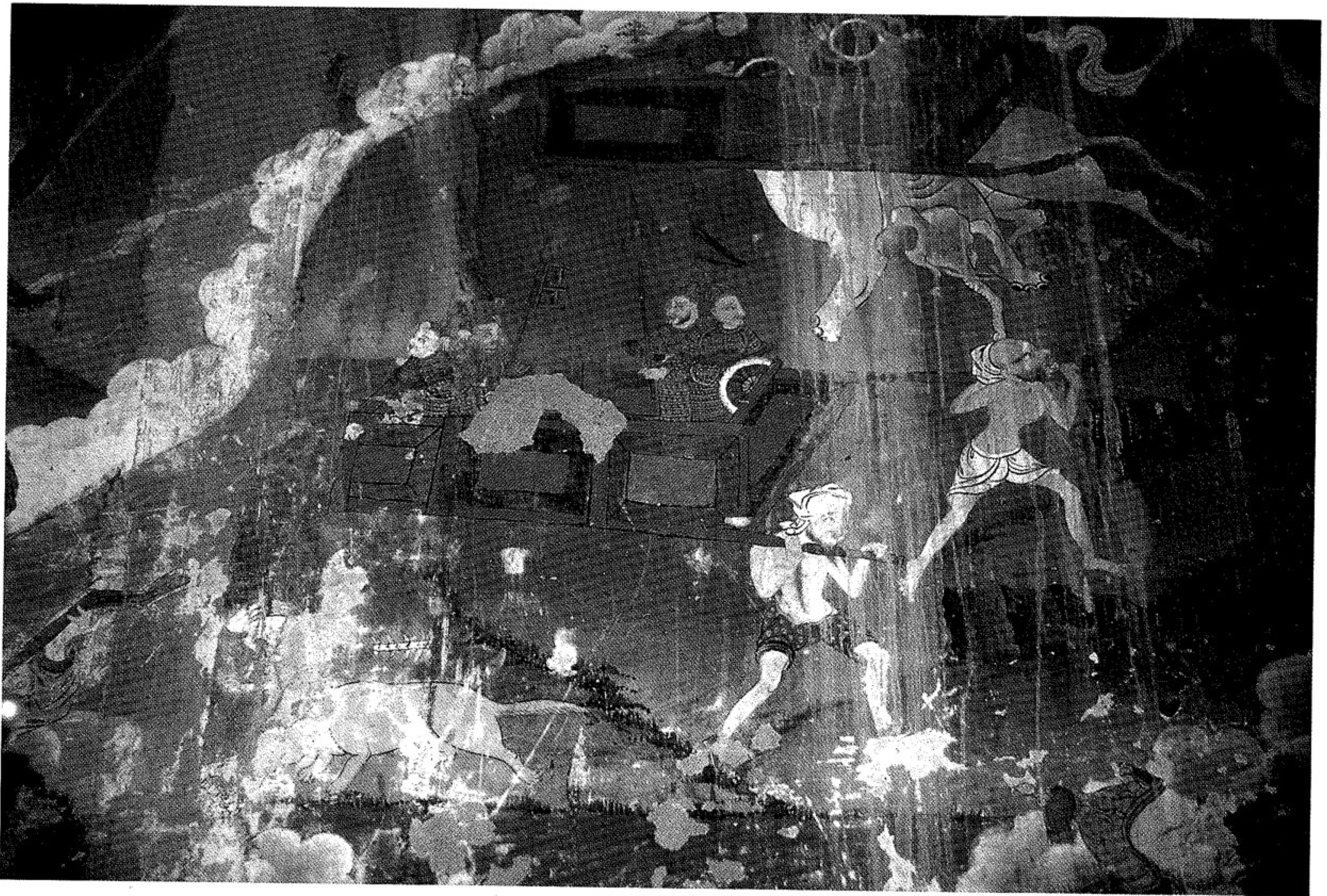
Pl. 14. Yamāntaka. Mural in the Kye-rdor-khang, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph Marilyn Kennell.

Pl. 15. Māyādevī in procession? An episode from the deeds of the Buddha in a Chinese manner? Detail of ground floor mural, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph M. Tarlet.

Pl. 16. Siddhārtha renouncing royal life? An episode from the deeds of the Buddha in a Chinese manner? Detail from a ground floor mural in Gong-dkar late 15th c. Photograph Michel Tarlet.



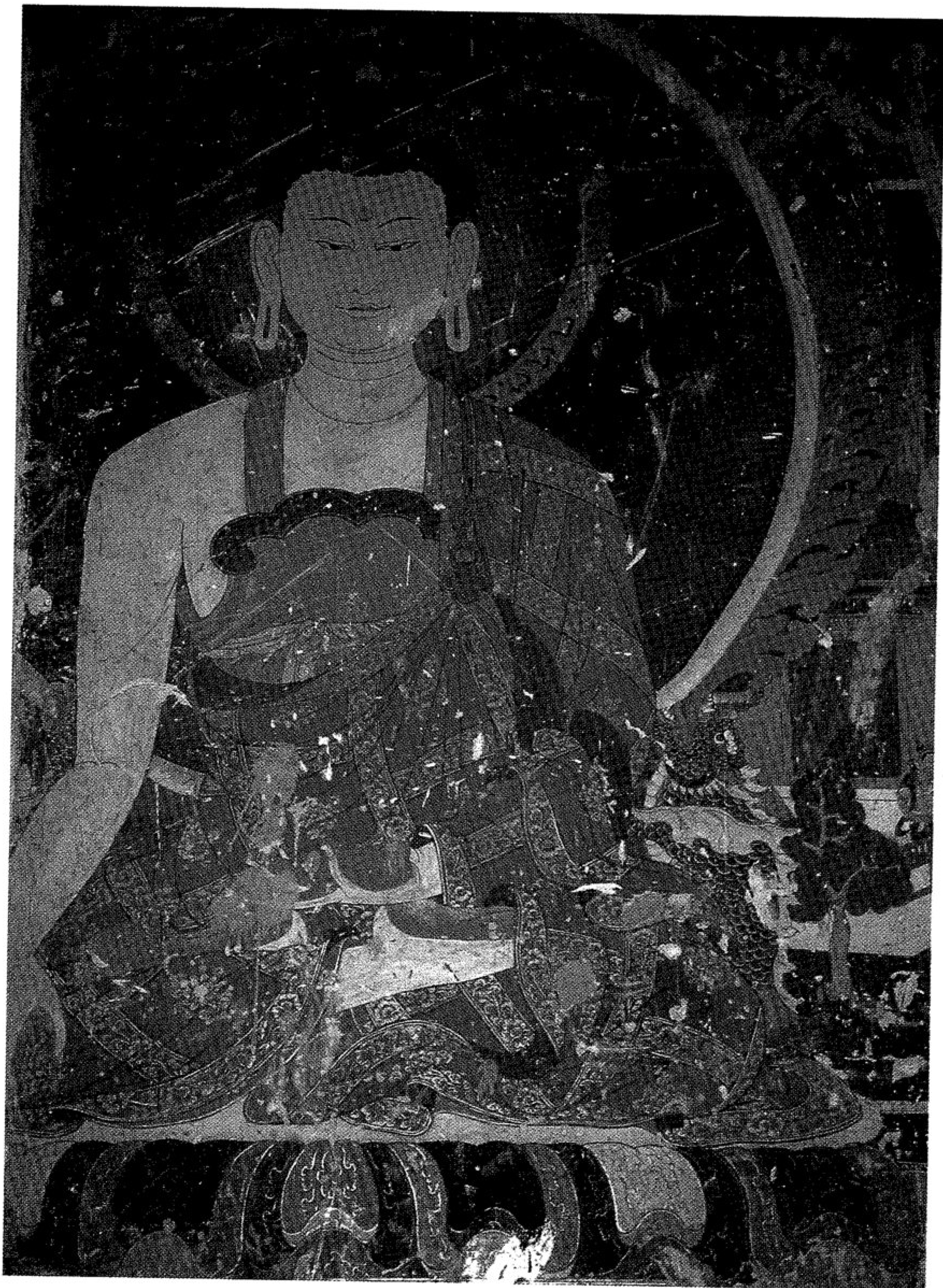
Pl. 17. Narrative mural (Avadānas). Detail of damaged mural, ground floor, right side chapel, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph: Roberto Vitali.



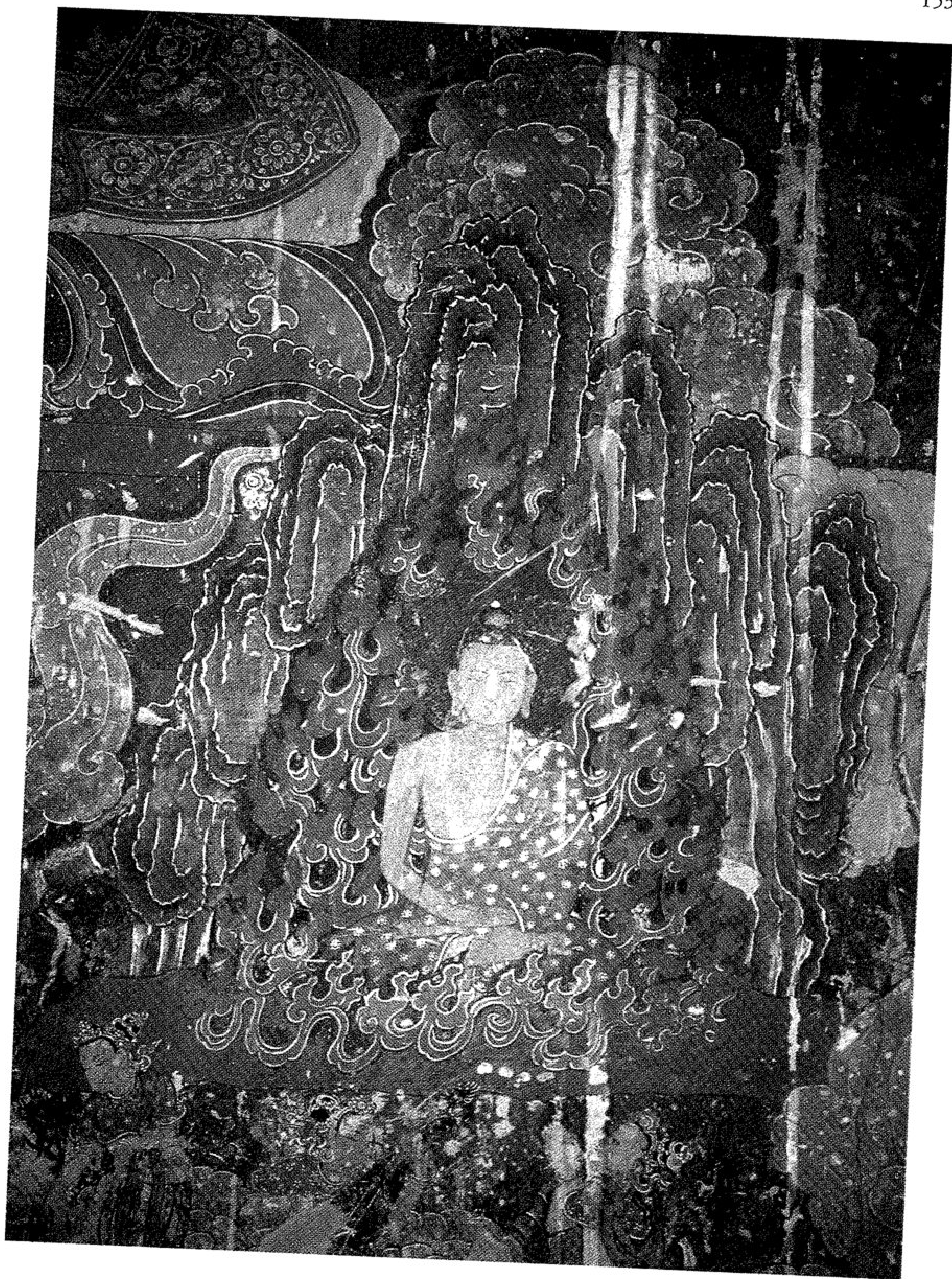
Pl. 18. Narrative mural (Avadānas). Detail of damaged mural, ground floor, left side chapel, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph: Roberto Vitali.



Pl. 19. Buddha. Detail mural, Gong-dkar, ground floor, side chapel left, late 15th c. Photograph: Roberto Vitali.



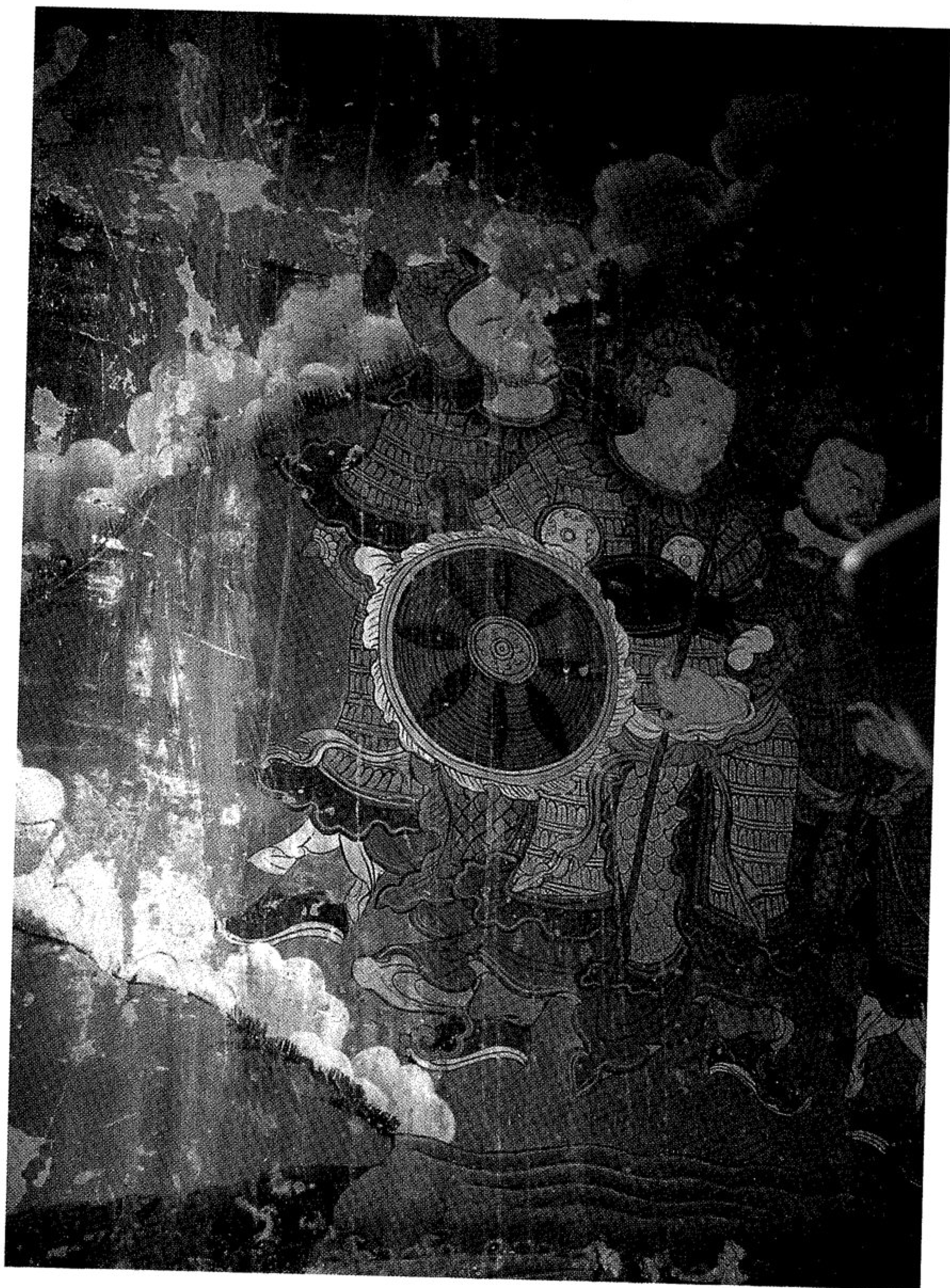
Pl. 20. Buddha. Detail of damaged mural, ground floor, side chapel right, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph: Roberto Vitali. Note the partial resemblance to the Chinese Buddha painting at gNas-rnying, fig. 42.



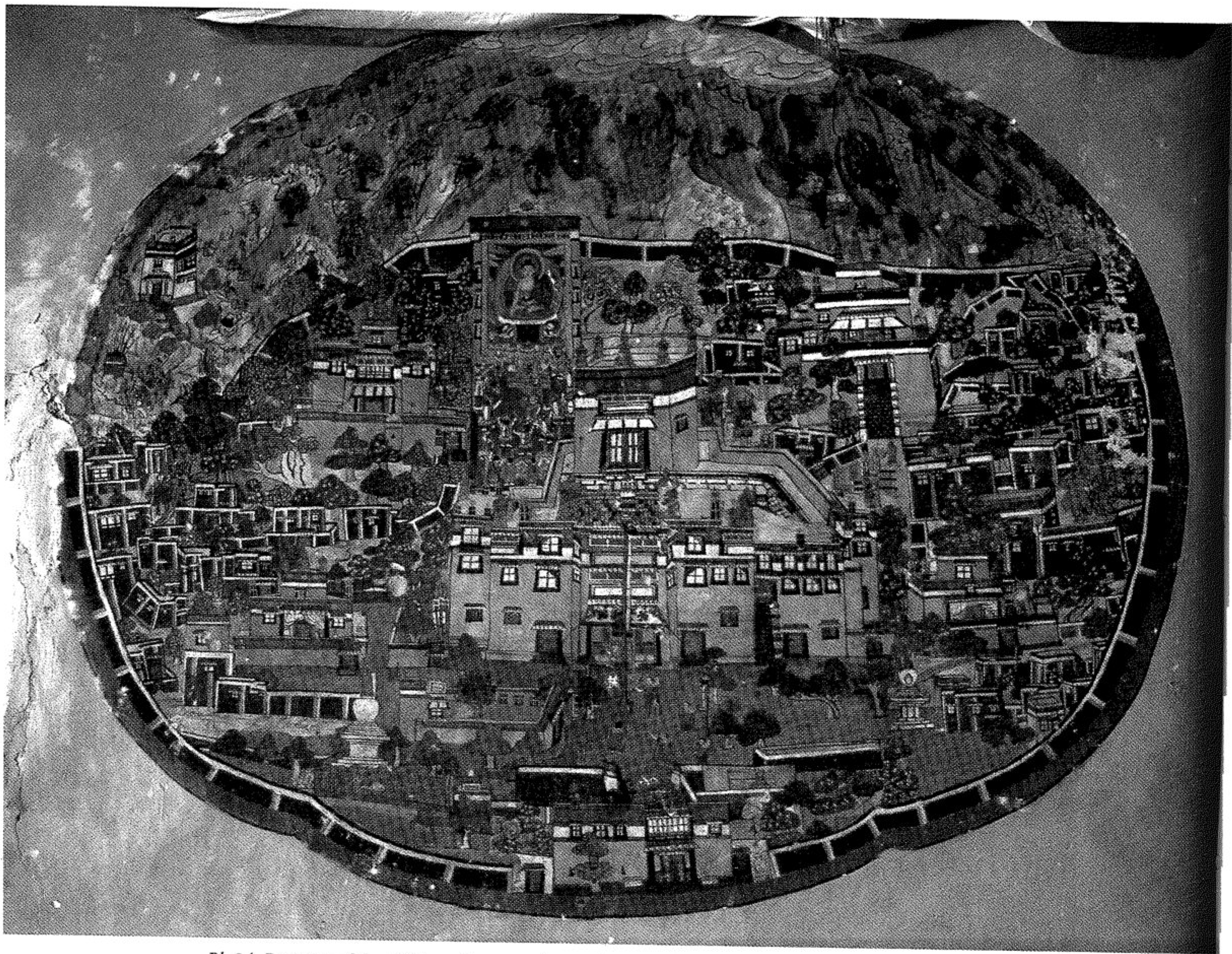
Pl. 21. Buddha surrounded by flames. Detail of damaged mural, ground floor, right chapel, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph: Roberto Vitali



Pl. 22. Detail of damaged Avadāna mural, ground floor, right chapel, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph: Roberto Vitali.



Pl. 23. Soldiers. Detail of damaged narrative mural, ground floor, left side chapel, Gong-dkar, late 15th c. Photograph: Roberto Vitali.



Pl. 24. Depiction of the old Gong-dkar monastic complex. Mural painting, Gong-dkar, early 20th-century. Painted by the artist Ye-shes-bstan-'dzin. Photograph D. Jackson, 1986.



Pl. 25. The goddess Uṣṇīṣavijāya. An example of a mKhyen-ris style. Thangka, 17th c.?, 49.5 x 37.5 cm. Essen collection. Published: G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, pp. 84-85; = no. II 136 (I 46).



Pl. 26. sPyan-ras-gzigs Padma'i-dra-ba-can (a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara). A painting with some stylistic similarity to the mKhyen-ris. Note especially the coloration of nimbuses and treatment of deities' upper garment. Thangka, 84 x 65 cm. Now in the Potala Palace, Lhasa. After Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 95.

According to one relatively late source, Gong-dkar mKhyen-brtse himself wrote a manual on religious art or iconometry, though this is otherwise unknown.[341] It may be that later tradition ascribed to mKhyen-brtse a treatise composed by a subsequent follower of the tradition; such a manual is attributed for instance to a later artist from Gong-dkar, bShes-gnyen-rnam-rgyal (who no doubt followed in Gong-dkar mKhyen-brtse's tradition). This work of bShes-gnyen-rnam-rgyal is said specifically to have been an incomplete treatise on iconometry (*tshad yig thor bu*).[342]

Nowadays identifiable paintings in the mKhyen-ris style are relatively rare, the murals at Gong-dkar being the most important extant examples. Previously it was suggested that the rarity of the style resulted in part from the later decline of the Sa-skya-pa schools in central Tibet, which occurred especially from the 17th century onwards. But this suggestion was based on the erroneous hypothesis that the style had begun as late as the mid 16th century and had been linked almost exclusively to the Sa-skya-pa school.[343]

In the future it should be possible to identify more works in this style, as soon as a few typical examples have been published. The tradition was actually not that rare. References to the mKhyen-ris as a living style continue to turn up throughout most of the 17th century. In 1630, for example, the great 'Brug-pa master dPag-bsam-dbang-po (1593–1651) sponsored some mKhyen-ris style work (alongside paintings in other styles) when he had the murals at bKra-shis-mthong-smon repainted.[344] Similarly the master Chos-dbyings-rang-grol in about 1644 is said to have painted in the mKhyen-ris as well as in the sMan-ris style.[345]

mKhyen-ris artists also contributed in important ways to projects sponsored by the 5th Dalai Lama (and later the sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho), on which some of the greatest sMan-ris painters also worked. In 1648, painters of the mKhyen-ris tradition (led by a master named mKhas-grub?) painted for the 5th Dalai Lama the murals of gurus, tutelary deities and protectors of both "New" and "Old" tantric lineages in the gSang-sngags-dga'-tshal temple at Chos-'khor rGyal in 'Ol-kha.[346] Six years later in 1654, the mKhyen-ris masters Gong-dkar gSang-sngags-mkhar-pa and Zho-ra dGos-dgos are listed among the five most prominent artists who led a group of some sixty-eight painters of both sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris traditions in renovating the main assembly hall and other chapels at 'Bras-spungs under the patronage of that same Dalai Lama.[347] In about 1669, the 5th Dalai Lama sponsored the painting of a set of thangkas in an exquisite mKhyen-ris style depicting the *Lam 'bras* guru lineage—showing Kha'u Brag-rdzong-pa's lineage after Mus-chen sems-dpa'-chen-po (1388–1469)—a set of paintings commissioned in the memory of and dedicated to the recently deceased sPos-khang mkhan-po zur-pa 'Bum-rams-pa. The chief supervisor of the project was Glang-bu, and the head artist was gSang-sngags-mkhar-pa, who was the chief artist (*dbu mdzad*) of the Gong-dkar monastic center.[348]

Another interesting reference to the mKhyen-ris style from the autobiography of the 5th Dalai Lama refers to the commissioning around 1670/71 of a set of thangkas depicting maṇḍalas (*dkyil thang*) from the Vajrāvalī cycle. The political ruler (sDe-pa) undertook to sponsor the large project and set up a workshop for it. Since sMan-thang-pa had been perfectly expert in peaceful deities and mKhyen-brtse in fierce deities and maṇḍalas, in the Great Fifth's opinion it was essential that



Fig. 76. The 5th Dalai Lama. After Āyurveda in Tibet (Leh 1970), p. 2, left.



Fig. 77. sPyan-ras-gzigs Padma'i-dra-ba-can, detail of main figure. Thangka, 84 x 65 cm. Now preserved in the Potala Palace, Lhasa. After Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 95.

both lineages should not die out. Though in the time of sDe-pa bSod-nams-rab-brtan (d. 1657) there had not been really that many painters who could actually work in the mKhyen-ris style, they now called a skillful group together led by the slob-dpon of Gong-dkar chos-sde, gSang-sngags-mkhar-pa. The thangkas they took as their main examples for copying were from a set that had belonged to Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan-pa Kun-dga'-rnam-rgyal himself. (Presumably, therefore, the paintings were by mKhyen-brtse chen-mo, or possibly by his immediate disciples.) To guarantee the accuracy of the paintings, a team of four scholars compared the Tibetan translations of the Indian sources *Vajrāvalī* and *Kriyāsamuccaya* as well as the liturgical works of mNga'-ris-pa Tshul-'od (fl. 15th c.?[349]) and the Thar-rtse paṇ-chen ('Brang-ti paṇ-chen Nam-mkha'-dpal-bzang, 1535–1602, thirteenth abbot of Ngor). Differences and points of doubt were referred to the Zhwa-lu mkhan-po "bKa'-'gyur-ba" mGon-po-bsod-nams-mchog-ldan (1603–1659)—a learned teacher of the Dalai Lama especially for Sa-skya-pa Tshar-pa lineages[350]—for his decision, and some queries were also directed to the 5th Dalai Lama himself. The Indian basic text and the model thangkas (*thang dpe*) were taken as the decisive authorities. The few slight deviations were noted as annotations in red letters in the ritual texts. Supervisor of the work was the master Thon-bya-sgo-nas. The paintings were completed in the eighth lunar month of the iron-pig year (1671).[351]

Then in 1673 the extensive mural repainting of the Lhasa Ra-mo-che temple was undertaken. Over fifty painters participated in this work, including the two chief directors of painting work (*bris pa'i dbu chen*), Gong-dkar chos-sde gSang-sngags-mkhar chos-mdzad gZhon-nu and 'Bras-spungs slob-dpon Ngag-dbang-phrin-las, the three middle-level painter-overseers (*dbu 'bring*) Gra-nang sBuṣ-khyim-pa (sPus-khyim-pa?) Ngag-dbang-sri-chod, Zhos-ra rGyal-po and gSang-mkhar Tshe-'phel, and the junior painter-overseer (*dbu chung*) sBus-khyim-pa (sPus-khyim-pa?) Nor-dbang.[352] At least the two painters associated with gSang-mkhar worked in the mKhyen-ris. Still later, in the mid 1690s during the delayed building of the reliquary stūpa and temple for the 5th Dalai Lama (d. 1682), a large group of mKhyen-ris painters worked under government support (alongside a still bigger group of sMan-ris painters and a large contingent of Newar metal workers). The foremost of these mKhyen-ris masters were: the mKhyen-lugs dbu-chen gSang-sngags-mkhar Tshe-'phel, the dbu-'bring sPus-khyim Ngag-grol, and the two dbu-chung Ngag-dbang-bsod-brtan and Byams-pa-rgyal-mtshan. Under the direction of four painters there also worked sixty-three ordinary painters of the mKhyen-ris tradition, all of whom are mentioned by name in Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho's account.[353] Elsewhere in the work Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho mentions again the master and director of the mKhyen-ris-tradition painters (*mkhyen lugs dbu chen*) gSang-sngags-mkhar-ba Tshe-'phel, and his junior painter-overseer the mKhyen-lugs dbu-chung (sPus-khyim) Ngag-grol.[354]

The mKhyen-ris thus survived as a living tradition until at least the turn of the 18th century, though perhaps mainly in southern dBus province and especially in or near its original home, Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan. A branch of the mKhyen-ris furthermore continued at 'Bri-gung from the early or mid 1700s until at least the early 1800s, as spread by the students of the religious master dKon-mchog-phrin-las-bzang-po (1656–1719), twenty-fourth gdan-sa of 'Bri-gung, who had been an exceptionally skilled painter.[355] The latter is said to have painted a small one-day thangka (*nyin thang*) of 'Jig-rten-gsum-mgon that survives until this day in Ladakh.[356] Thus according to tradition, 18th-century 'Bri-gung was home to a later offshoot of the mKhyen-ris.[357]



Fig. 78. Amitāyus painted in a mKhyen-ris style. After D. I. Lauf, Tibetan Sacred Art: The Heritage of Tantra (Berkeley, 1976), pl. 45.



Fig. 79. Detail, thangka of Amitāyus, showing a mKhyen-ris lotus seat. After D. I. Lauf (1976), pl. 45.



Fig. 80. Amitāyus. Painted in the 1960s in Dharamsala by the 20th-century Gong-dkar artist Ye-shes-bstan-'dzin. Photograph courtesy of Tashi Tsering.

Ye-shes-bstan-'dzin, a Late Reviver of the mKhyen-ris

By the late 19th century, however, the mKhyen-ris style seems no longer to have been a vital stylistic current in most parts of Tibet. And by the early 20th century, the style of mKhyen-brtse chen-mo and his followers had apparently died out as a separate living tradition. The memory of its founder, who was one of the greatest artistic geniuses that Tibet ever knew, was carried on mainly in the brief indigenous histories of art and in the recollections of discerning pilgrims who had seen and been awed by his masterpieces.

Nevertheless, in the mid 20th century the tradition was revived at least in part, mainly through the work of a single Gong-dkar artist, Ye-shes-bstan-'dzin (1915/6–1971), who had been inspired by mKhyen-brtse's murals and who imitated them in his own paintings. Ye-shes-bstan-'dzin had originally been a monk of Gong-dkar who when quite young had trained in a modern Cen-



Fig. 81. Ye-shes-bstan-'dzin of Gong-dkar and his wife, in Dharamsala. Photograph courtesy of Tashi Tsering.

tral Tibetan sMan-ris tradition of painting. But later he took a great interest in mKhyen-brtse's style. While still a young monk at Gong-dkar, he used to study and copy the old murals of mKhyen-brtse. With the passing of time, his other, non-artistic abilities were recognized, and after serving in the monastery as chant-leader (or precentor, *dbu mdzad*) for a while, he was then appointed chamberlain (*gsol dpon*) and finally steward (*phyag mdzod*) of the Gong-dkar sprul-sku's estate (*bla brang*). Even with these heavy responsibilities, he used to devote any spare time he could find to painting. In the 1950s he went to India in connection with his duties as steward, and there he disrobed. While there he also took a great interest in realistic Indian painting styles. In the 1960s until his death he lived and worked in Dharamsala, the seat of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Indian exile. He was a very modest, humble and generous person, but he trained no students.[358]

Notes

[318] sDe-srid, *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya*, vol. 1, p. 583.1; and De'u-dmar, *Rab gnas*, p. 17. Kaḥ-thog Si-tu mentions him as *mkhyen brtse chen mo* on p. 175.2 (88a) and on p. 230.1 (115b) as: *'gran gyi do med lha bzo sprul sku mkhyen brtse chen mo....* Zhu-chen, *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*, p. 149.5, calls him "mKhyen-brtse chen-po," while Klong-rdol, p. 415, calls him "sprul-sku mKhyen-brtse-ba."

[319] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 43, n. 73, quotes the Tibetan: *mkhyen brtses bod ris legs pa'i srol btod cing// lhag tu rgyud sde'i sku ni ches cher 'phags//.*

[320] sDe-srid, *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya*, vol. 1, pp. 582.4 and 583.1. This point seems to have eluded Zhu-chen and Kong-sprul, whereas De'u-dmar, *Rab gnas*, p. 17, and Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 106, were clearly aware of it.

[321] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, pp. 106f. Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 90.5, also mentions art works by mKhyen-brtse at Gong-dkar. On Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan-pa and the founding of the Gong-dkar monastic center, see Zhwa-lu Ri-sbug-sprul-sku Blo-gsal-bstan-skyong, *Zhwa lu gdan rabs*, pp. 175f. On other religious patronage by Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan-pa, see D. Jackson (1983), pp. 7–16, and (1987), pp. 74f.

[322] For two descriptions of Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan, see Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, pp. 156–160 (78b-80b), and Si-tu Paṇ-chen, 90.5 (*a* 45b). Both were extremely impressed by mKhyen-brtse's work. Si-tu Paṇ-chen writes: *gong dkar rdo rje gdan du gtsug lag khang gi dbu rtse gong mar rdo rje gdan pa'i sku gdung ril por bzhugs dngul gyi mchod rten la mkhyen brtse chen mos bzos pa'i lam 'bras bla brgyud kyi lder tshos bskor ba/ 'og mar mkhyen brtse bas bzos pa'i yo ga'i lha tshogs kyi lder tsho khyad thon/ li ma khang du li ma sna tshogs gcig tu thugs dam rdul tshon g.yogs pa'i kye rdor blos bslang rdo rje gdan pa rang gi khyad chos can bzhugs pa sogs mchod khang bcu grangs dang mgon khang steng 'og rnams su sku dang rten mdos sogs brjid bags can dang/ rdo rje 'jigs byed 'khor bcas kyi lder tsho ngo mtshar can sogs mdor na mjal rgyu mang zhing dngos gtsang ba dang bris 'bur mtha' dag mkhyen brtse ba rang gi phyag bdar ma yin pas bzo khyad phul du byung ba dper 'os pa 'dug cing/ kho bos dang por mjal dus khams pa a jo ba'i* [46a] *de mthong gis brnyes bcos log ge ba zhig las zhib mjal kyi skabs ma rnyed kyang sog po'i chos rje da las kho thug tu byams pa gling gi mkhan po gnang skabs yin pa 'dir pheb nas gong dkar ba'i slob dpon nam mkha' mdzod pa la chos khrid 'ga' re gsan gyi 'dug pa nged dang sngar thugs 'gris kyi stabs gzigs ma thag ngo mkhyen nas bzhugs khri las har bzhengs te pheb byung nas nged la khams 'dri 'dra mdzad 'dug pa kh*[o]*ng tshos gzigs nas slar nam mkha' mdzod pa rang gis yang skyar nged khrid de mchod khang rnams zhib mor mjal/.*

[323] At least that was the case in August of 1986 when I visited the monastery.

[324] A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang-kun-dga'-bsod-nams, *dPal rdo rje nag po*, vol. 2, pp. 97.2–99.1 (49a-50a). The passage concludes: *de dag gi sku'i bkod pa 'phral du bri ba'i slad du zhabs 'bring pa rnams la ras gzhi zhig gi rtsol ba bgyis bka' rtsal pa/ mtshan mo de ma thag ras gzhi chung ngu tsam las ma rnyed pas/ rje nyid kyis de ka la sku'i dbyibs ji lta ba'i skya ris gnang/ nang par nas rig byed mkhyen brtse bas/ tshon bris rdzogs par mdzad cing/ shin tu gces spras kyi nang nas mchod gtor gyi dbus su yun du bzhugs pa las/ nam zhig na nye gnas chen mo brgya sbyin pa sku khams ma bde ba'i dus bris sku 'di'i steng nas rjes gnang tshar 'ga' gnang/ re zhig sngas srung gi tshul du bzhugs pa las/ dus phyis yang khong pa'i sger gzhis rnam rgyal rab brtan na rten gsum kun gyi* [50a] *gtso bor bzhugs so//.*

[325] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 156 (78b): ... *mgon khang ka brgyad ma na mkhyen brtse chen mo'i phyag bzos 'bur sku 'jigs rung nyams mtshar 'dom phyed gsum tsam re.* G. Tucci (1956), *To Lhasa and Beyond*, p. 151, stated: "A statue of Dorje Jiche in the Gonkhang, the most expressive I ever saw in Tibet, came close to frightening me out of my wits."

[326] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 159.5 (80a): *bla ma dngos yin snang skye ba/ pra rtsi legs po snum nas bton ma thag pa lta bu sha stag/.*

[327] *Ibid.*, p. 175.2 (88a): *mkhyen brtse chen mo'i phyag bris kyang snang/.*

[328] *Ibid.*, p. 183.2 (90a): *bka' brgyud gser phreng mkhyen brtse chen mo'i phyag bris rgyu tshon bkod phul gyur 'ja' shar ba 'dra ba thog sleb ma snang ba gyur.*

[329] Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, vol. 1, p. 621.6 (*da* 211b).

[330] G. Tucci (1956), p. 151, describes murals at Gong-dkar that may well have been by mKhyen-brtse's hand: "I saw the assembly hall, where statues of the Buddhas of the Three Times were surrounded by the eight Bodhisattvas; and the circumambulation corridor with good frescoes of the Lord Buddha's life showing a marked Chinese influence. On the walls right and left of the cell were painted the Lamas of the Sakyapa sect and the main events of their lives: dignified but spirited and lively pictures, free from the hieratic stiffness that too often burdens Tibetan art."

[331] See bDud-'dul-rdo-rje as quoted in E. G. Smith (1970), p. 43, n. 73, referring to the old sMan-ris (*sman rnying*) as compared to the original mKhyen-ris: "[The Old sMan-ris] had slightly thinner pigments and was more expressive than the former [i.e. than the mKhyen-ris]": *cung zad tshon srab nyams gyur de bas che//.*

[332] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 44, n. 75, stated that mKhyen-brtse's paintings included: "figures from the tantric cycles in which the Sa-skya schools specialized." But the relevant passage from bDud-'dul-rdo-rje's *dPyad*

don tho chung accessible to me does not mention the Sa-skya-pas in particular. See below, appendix E.

[333] A-mes-zhabs, *Srid pa gsum*, p. 61b.5: *de yang gong dkar sprul sku sbyin pa rnam rgyal gyis lha khang chen mo'i thig khang du gur phab nas/ mgon po'i rus shing dang span 'dzugs la 'jim pa phal cher g.yogs grub mtshams glo bur du rlung mar chen po lang ste/.*

[334] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 443.6 (222a): *gangs* [sic] *dkar mkhyen brtse'i phyag bzor dper mdzad pa'i gur zhal* [222b] *lcam sogs lha bcu gsum thog sleb khyad 'phags/.*

[335] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 108: *rgyal mchog lnga pa chen pos rdo rje 'phreng ba'i thang sku bzhengs gnang skabs zhi ba'i rigs rnams sman thang pa'i lag rgyun dang/ khro bo dang/ dkyil 'khor gyi rigs mkhyen brtse'i lag rgyun legs tshul gyis bris 'jug gnang gsal 'dug pa.*

[336] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 109.5 (55a): *mkhyen bris mkhas pa kong po a po bas lo bzhi zla ba bdun bris pa thub dbang gnas brtan rgya gar ma 'gran bral kaḥ thog dam gtsang byams gsum skyes rabs de'i dbyibs 'dra ba nyer gsum dang/ mkhyen bris pa 'brug stod nor bu'i chos rgyal* [55b] *phan bde'i 'byung gnas dad rten dge 'dun zur ri pa'i yol thang rgya nag lha bzo rnying pa nged rang gi lcags la'i gnas bcu yol thang bri mkhan de 'dra ba la yul bkod snang ba 'gyur nyer gsum/*. It is hard to interpret the passage, but Kaḥ-thog Si-tu does mention a "curtain-thangka" (*yol thang*) of dGe-'dun Zur-ri-pa by an early Chinese artisan, which he compares to a curtain-thangka from lCags-la (the Mi-nyag Dar-rtse-mdo area) that they had in Kaḥ-thog. He sums up by saying there were some five hundred matchless thangkas here at mTshur-phu in the Kar-bris, mKhyen-bris, and sMan-bris styles, as well as paintings by Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje.

[337] *Ibid.*, p. 261.4 (131a): *sne gdong rgyal po'i rten gnas brtan mkhyen bris shin tu spus dag mtha' ljang can nyer gsum.*

[338] *Ibid.*, p. 229.5–230.2 (115a-b), enumerates the contents of the set and concludes by describing them as: *'gran gyi do med lha bzo sprul sku mkhyen brtse chen mo'i lugs/.*

[339] Padma-dkar-po, *Li ma brtag pa'i rab byed*, p. 306 (*ka cha* 7b): *mkhyen brtse dbon po tshe dbang kun mkhyen dang/ mkhas skor ba rnal 'byor nyams dga' blo bde'i ched du bkod pa ....*

[340] Padma-dkar-po, *Sems dpa' chen po*, vol. 1, pp. 511 and 521.5 (*ga nya* 89a and 94a). The first passage runs: *gong dkar rdo rje gdan nas mkhyen brtse dbon po ba rgyud la dogs gcod du rkang gtad slebs pa sogs la chos dang/ dogs gcod kyi re ba bskangs/* .... The other passage has been quoted in a previous note. These passages were cited by Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 107, as pp. 83b.6 and 88b.5.

[341] Such a work is attributed also to mKhyen-brtse in a list of Tibetan sources on iconometry by Kong-sprul, pt. 1, p. 573.6 (*oṃ* 209b): *sman mkhyen rnam pa gnyis/ bu ston dang rje mi bskyod zhabs kyi nyi ma chen po'i me long/ phyis su rgyugs che ba'i sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho'i g.ya' sel sogs bod kyi gzhung lugs chag tshad ston pa'i yi ge shin tu mang ngo//.*

[342] This is mentioned third in a list of sources on pp. 28–29 in the publication *Bris sku rnam bzhag mthong ba don ldan* (Dharamsala: Shes-rig-lhan-khang, n.d. [ca. 1980?]). The sources listed were treatises of: (1) Tsong-kha-pa, (2) sMan-thang-pa, and (3) Gong-dkar-ba bShes-gnyen-rnam-rgyal, (4) An anonymous author of a prose treatise on iconometry (*mdzad byang med pa'i cha tshad kyi gzhung tshig lhug par byas pa cig*), and (5) [A-kyā yongs-'dzin?] (a.) *Tshigs su bcad pa yod pa dag dang*, and (b.) *Lag len mthong ba brgyad pa'i man ngag*. I am indebted to Mr. Tashi Tsering for this reference.

[343] Cf. E. G. Smith (1970), p. 44.

[344] Macdonald and Vergati Stahl (1979), p. 32, who refer to dPag-bsam-dbang-po, *dPal 'brug pa rin po che rgyal dbang thams cad mkhyen pa dpag bsam dbang po thub bstan yongs 'du'i dpal gyi sde'i rnam par thar pa*, xylograph, f. 101a.

[345] Dalai bla-ma V, *Zur thams cad*, xylograph (filmed by the NGMPP), f. 76a.

[346] *Ibid.*, p. 283 (*ka* 142a): *gsang sngags dga' tshal du mkhyen lugs mkhas bsgrubs* [sic] *kyis gsang sngags gsar rnying gi bla ma yi dam chos srung gi ldeb bris dngos gtsang/.*

[347] *Ibid.*, p. 445 (*ka* 223): *mkhyen brtse ba'i dbu mdzad gong dkar gsang sngags mkhar pa.*

[348] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, p. 163.3 (*kha* 82a): *spos khang mkhan po zur pa 'bum rams pa rdo rje btsun mo'i zhing khams su gshegs pa'i bsngo rten du glang bu nas kyis do dam byas pa'i lam 'bras brgyud pa'i zhal thang mkhyen ris dngos gtsang ba zhig byung ba mus chen sems dpa' chen po man kha'u brag rdzong pa'i brgyud rim gong dkar chos sde'i dbu mdzad gsang sngags mkhar pa can gyis bris te bsabs/.* See also *ibid.* (1989–1991 ed.), vol. 2, p. 157. It is also possible that the word *dbu mdzad* (rendered above as "chief artist") here has the more usual meaning of "precentor" (chant leader), a monastic office.

[349] mNga'-ris-pa Tshul-khrims-'od-zer seems to have been the lama mentioned as "lnga-rig paṇ-chen" Tshul-[khrims]-'od-zer in an inscription to a thangka now in Los Angeles depicting three maṇḍalas. See P. Pal (1983), p. 260. The inscription also mentions the patron as one rGyal-mtshan-'od-zer, who may be the dMar-ston rGyal-mtshan-'od-zer who is mentioned in the *Blue Annals* as an important early master in the transmission of the *Kriyāsa-muccaya* tradition in Tibet, evidently a student of Ngor-chen Kun-dga'-bzang-po. See G. Roerich trans. (1949–53), p. 1054. A certain mNga'-ris rab-'byams Tshul-khrims is also mentioned in Alyce Nash *et al.* (1994), in an inscription to a maṇḍala thangka from ca. the early 15th c.: "...Donated by mNga'-ris rab-'byams Tshul-khrims to fulfill the vows [i.e. in memory of?] Shes-rab-bzang-po."

[350] A brief biography of this master appears in Zhwa-lu Ri-sbug sprul-sku, pp. 329–337, and his full-length

biography by the 5th Dalai bla-ma is preserved at the end of vol. 4 (*nga*) of the *Lam 'bras slob bshad.*

[351] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de* (1991), vol. 2, p. 176: *'phreng ba'i dkyil thang bzheng dgos yod pa sde pas dang dod kyis khur bzhes te las grwa 'dzugs pa'i sgo dod/ de'ang zhi ba'i rigs la sman thang pa dang khro bo dang dkyil thang la mkhyen brtse ba byang chub pas lugs gnyis ka ma nub pa zhig dgos rgyur sde pa bsod nams rab brtan gyi dus mkhyen brtse phyogs kyi ri mo bas go ma lo ba lta bus ha cang mang rgyu mi 'dug rung gong dkar chos sde nas slob dpon gsang sngags mkhar pas thog drangs mkhas bsgrags bos/ ma dpe kun mkhyen rdo rje gdan pa'i thugs dam thang ka la gtso bor bzung/ 'phreng ba kri ya gnyis kyi rgya gzhung/ mnga' ris pa tshul 'od dang paṇ chen thar rtse pa'i yig cha rnams mthun mi mthun gyi go 'dur dge slong 'jam dbyangs grags pa/ gnas gsar 'jam dbyangs bstan 'dzin/ phun tshogs legs 'byor/ dkar brag pa ngag dbang byams pa bzhis byas nas mi gcig pa rnams zha lu mkhan rin po cher dogs gcod dang 'di gar yang dris shing gtso bo rgya gzhung dang thang dpe btsan pa byas/ 'then 'khyer cung zad byung ba 'thor bur yig cha la dmar mchan phab nas gzhis ka'i sgo lcog lho mar 'dri ba'i do dam thon bya sgo nas kyis byas te 'go btsugs pa lcags phag hor zla brgyad pa'i nang du gegs med par grub/.*

[352] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 326ff.

[353] sDe-srid, *mChod sdong* (1990 ed.), p. 271. They included painters from gSung-gling, rNam-rab, Gong-dkar chos-sde, Tsher-shing, bDe-chos, Zho-ra, rGyal-gling, Yul-chos, rDza-rong, Gling, Brag-ram, sPus-bde, mNyes-thang, bKra-shis chos-sde, Hor, sNye-mo, and bKra-shis-rtse chos-sde.

[354] sDe-srid, *mChod sdong*, vol. 1, p. 420.4. The same work later mentions (p. 421.2) a mixed group of sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris artists (*bris pa sman mkhyen 'dres pa*) and also (p. 421.4) the masters and ordinary painters in a mixed group of sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris painters (*sman mkhyen 'dres pa'i dbu byings*).

[355] bsTan-'dzin-padma-rgyal-mtshan, *Nges don* (composed in 1808–9), p. 401: *lha bris la sbyangs pa mdzad pas shin tu mkhas shing da lta 'bri gung 'dir mkhyen lugs kyi ri mo rje 'dis* [= *'di'i*] *zhal slob kyi rgyun yin.* I owe this reference to Mr. Tashi Tsering. Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas also mentions a dKon-mchog-phrin-las on p. 247, though he would seem to have lived much later.

[356] 'Bri-gung skyabs-mgon Che-tshang Rin-po-che, interview Hamburg, 7 December 1994.

[357] For more on the 'Bri-gung styles, see below, Chapter 13.

[358] The main source for the above information was his wife, Blo-bzang-chos-mgron. In an interview on 15 Oct. 1982 in Dharamsala with Mr. Tashi Tsering, she stated that a number of his paintings were commissioned by noteworthy people, such as a large painting of the Buddha commissioned by Mrs. Bedi. The temple surrounding the large Māṇi-wheel in Manali is also said to have been painted by him, and he is known to have painted numerous backdrops or similar works for the Dharamsala drama troupe. Several of the recently painted small murals in a "neo-mKhyen-ris" style at Gong-dkar itself in the room above the monastery's front entrance porch were also the works of "Phyag-mdzod-lags," as he was affectionately known. (See Pl. 24.) These 20th-century paintings are sometimes wrongly ascribed to mKhyen-brtse chen-mo himself. Cf. V. Chan (1994), p. 479.

Chapter 5

The Painting Traditions of the Karma-pa Encampment

Following the establishment of the sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris styles in the mid 15th century, several generations passed without any further major development being remarked by later historians. The next noteworthy style came into being only in the second half of the 16th century (i.e. about a century after sMan-bla-don-grub), and it arose as a "court style" of the great Karma-pa hierarchs. During the period when this tradition developed, the Karma-pa lamas lived much of the time in a large tent "city" that was often on the move, with great pomp and ceremony, from one district to another. This mobile headquarters of the Karma-pas was called the "Great Karma Encampment" (*karma sgar chen*), and the main painting tradition patronized in the encampment thus became known as the Karma-sgar-bris, i.e. the "style of the Karma encampment," or just "the encampment style" (sGar-bris).[359]

The originator of the sGar-bris style is traditionally said to have been a certain Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis. As a small child he is said to have been recognized as an "emanation" of the 8th Karma-pa Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje (1507–1554), who predicted that this child would carry on the Karma-pa's activities in the special sphere of making sacred images.[360] The 9th Karma-pa, dBang-phyug-rdo-rje (1556–1603), who was Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis's contemporary, was proficient in some aspects of art and had executed the sketches for several murals including those of the "Hundred Birth Stories" (*'khrungs rabs brgya pa*) on the walls of one of the courtyards (*'khyams*) in the Karma-pa home monastery of mTshur-phu. Nevertheless, he was apparently not a remarkable painter.[361] For that reason, too, it may have made sense to his followers that the previous Karma-pa had projected a special emanation to accomplish to perfection what the present Karma-pa could not.

Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis's First Painting Teacher, dKon-mchog-phan-bde of E

Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis initially studied art under the master dKon-mchog-phan-bde of E or g.Ye, a district in southern dBus province to the southeast of Lhasa. This painter was a follower of the sMan-ris tradition and was traditionally said to be an emanation of Wen-ch'eng kung-chu, the Chinese consort of the 7th-century Tibetan ruler Srong-btsan-sgam-po.[362] As a strictly historical personage, dKon-mchog-phan-bde is recorded to have been the important artist who was active after the death of the 9th Karma-pa dBang-phyug-rdo-rje, leading the group of artists who prepared the necessary reliquaries and chapel in the years 1604–5.[363] The sprul-sku-ba Phan-bde and Tshe-'bum-brtan from dBus province were also active at the large building project at 'Og-min Karma-dgon in Khams (founded by Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa) under the patronage of the Si-tu Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1567–1630).[364] The murals they painted in the main assembly hall there included a depiction of the "Hundred Deeds of the Buddha" (*mdzad brgya*) following the written plan (*bkod yig*) composed by the 6th Zhwa-dmar

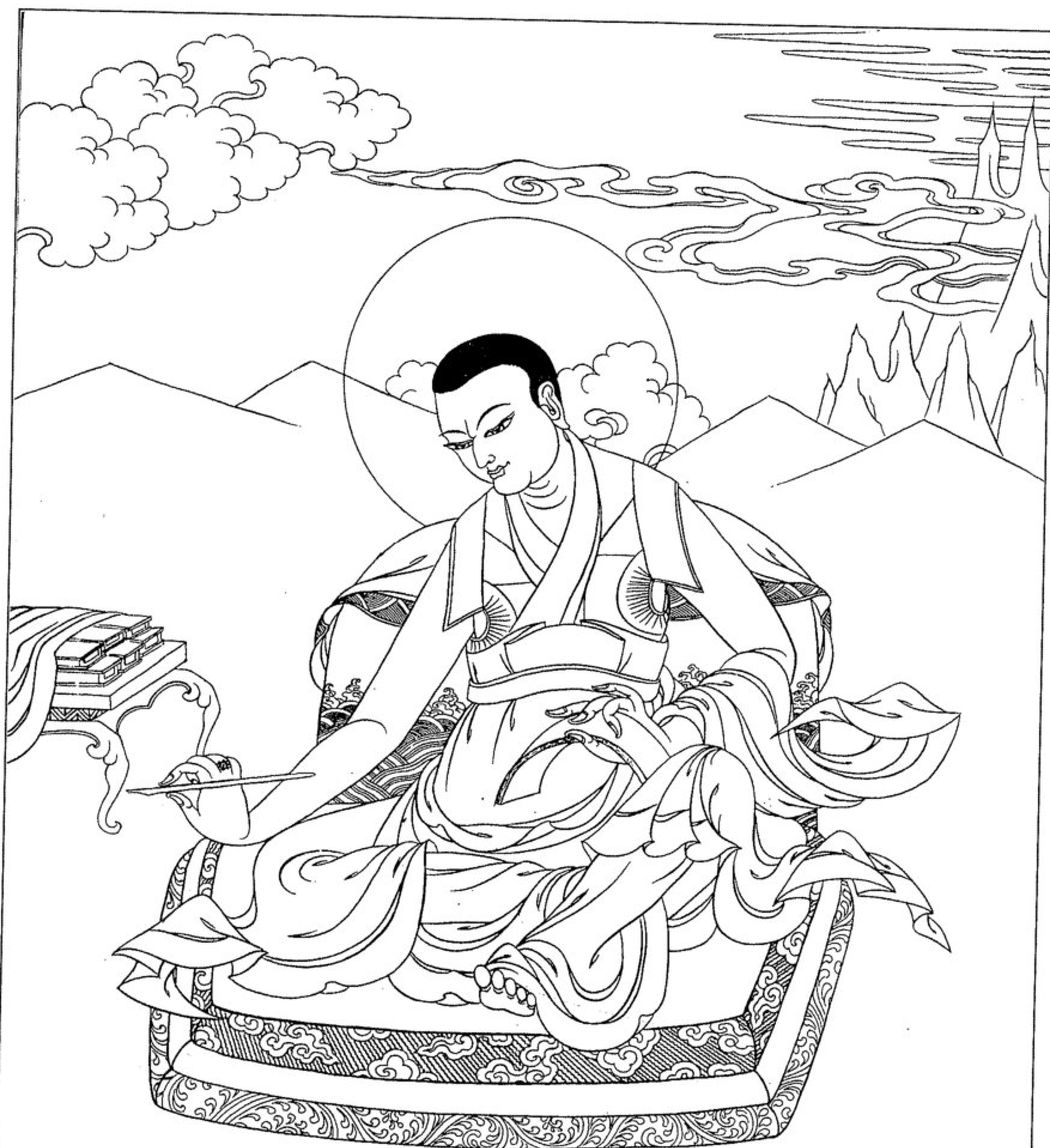


Fig. 82. Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis. Modern drawing, sGar-bris style. After Gega Lama (1983), p. 21.

Gar-dbang Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug (1584–1630).[365] These murals seem to have been those that were later described by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu as being in an "old-fashioned sGar-bris" (*sgar bris rnying tshugs can*).[366] Similarly, in the old residence chapel of the Karma-pa at Karma-dgon, there once existed a wonderful mural of the great Indian adept Saraha by the same Zhwa-dmar Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug, with landscapes in a Chinese style.[367] Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug is known to have visited Karma monastery in 1610.[368]

The tradition that dKon-mchog-phan-bde from E was the emanation of the Chinese princess who introduced much Chinese culture into Tibet is perhaps an indication of a very strong inclination toward Chinese painting styles. Be that as it may, his student Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis as a mature artist later exceeded all his predecessors in this regard, and his tradition came to show "the greatest Chinese influence of any of the Tibetan schools."[369]



Fig. 83. Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje. Detail of Kar-shod-pa composition, after Karma Thinley (1980), p. 88.



Fig. 84. The Chinese Princess Kong-jo (Wen-ch'en Kung-chu). Modern drawing, sGar-bris style. After Gega Lama (1983), p. 19.

Chinese Influences on Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis

Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis was evidently groomed and patronized by two other great Karma bka'-brgyud lamas of the time. The 5th Zhwa-dmar Karma-pa, dKon-mchog-yan-lag (1525–1583), and still later the 4th rGyal-tshab sprul-sku, Grags-pa-don-grub (1547–1613), are said in fact to have given specific instructions to Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis regarding what works of art he was to take as his models and what sort of stylistic synthesis he was to aim for.[370] The paintings he was to emulate included:[371]

1. A Chinese scroll painting (on silk?) (*si thang*) offered to the 5th Karma-pa De-bzhin-gshegs-pa (1384–1415) by the Chinese emperor (Chengzu/Yongle) in 1407.[372]
2. A realistic likeness (*'dra 'bag*)[373] of the 3rd Karma-pa Rang-byung-rdo-rje (1284–1339) when he appeared in the moon (*karma zla shar ma*) during an audience with the Chinese emperor, as was witnessed by a large public assembly which also included the Chinese artist who painted it.[374]
3. The old Chinese-style depiction of the Sixteen Elders at Yer-pa known as the "Yer-pa rwa-ba-ma."[375]

Furthermore they specified that he was to draw bodily forms in agreement with Indian tradition, apply coloring and shading in accord with Chinese tradition, and paint landscapes in what was known as "Tibetan style," thus bringing together the excellent qualities of three great countries.

Presumably the above assertions were ultimately based on passages from the biographies of the respective Zhwa-dmar or rGyal-tshab sprul-sku.[376] In addition, the biography of the 5th Zhwa-dmar dKon-mchog-yan-lag records that in 1568 the same Zhwa-dmar Rin-po-che while in Phag-mo-rtse on the way to sTag-lung received a completed painting that he had instructed Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis to execute. He had ordered Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis to copy a wonderful painting of the great deeds of the Buddha by sMan-thang-pa that the latter had in turn copied from a Chinese scroll painting (*si thang*) of gNas-rnying. The Zhwa-dmar at this time wrote the inscriptions (*zhal yig*) for the thangka and also composed a brief exposition of the Buddha's twelve main deeds, having this written in gold letters on silk scrolls that could be hung to the right and left of the main painting.[377]

Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis thus carried still further the increasing penetration of Chinese styles that had already become very noticeable over a century earlier in the works of sMan-bla-don-grub. In Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis's paintings, one of the areas of greatest Chinese influence was in the layout or depiction of the landscapes. Kong-sprul states that for these, as well as for his application of shading and color, Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis took as his models Chinese (silk?) scroll paintings of the "Great Ming" (*tā ming*) period.[378] That he worked directly from Chinese models is further indicated by the fact that his murals of the Sixteen Elders in the assembly hall at gDan-sa Thel also had identifying name-inscriptions in Chinese, according to Si-tu Paṇ-chen, who saw them in 1722.[379]

His style was seen by another later Tibetan authority as a further step in the direction toward the use of more dilute colors (here employed in imitation of the thin washes used in certain Chinese landscape paintings).[380] On the other hand, according to Kong-sprul, Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis did not completely divorce himself from the basic system of figure proportions that sMan-thang-pa had followed. He did, however, supplement those proportions with bodily forms and dimensions copied from old (eastern?) Indian (i.e. Pāla-Sena?) cast-metal statues (*li ma*).[381]

Perhaps the modelling of painted images after Indian cast-metal figures allowed him to paint the peaceful (*zhi ba*) figures with "smaller faces and eyes, and therefore a relatively more tranquil appearance," as a modern Karma bka'-brgyud scholar described such figures in the typical later sGar-bris style.[382]

An earlier written description of the tradition that Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis founded is given by the scholar and connoisseur De'u-dmar dge-bshes. The latter in the tenth chapter, verses 33–

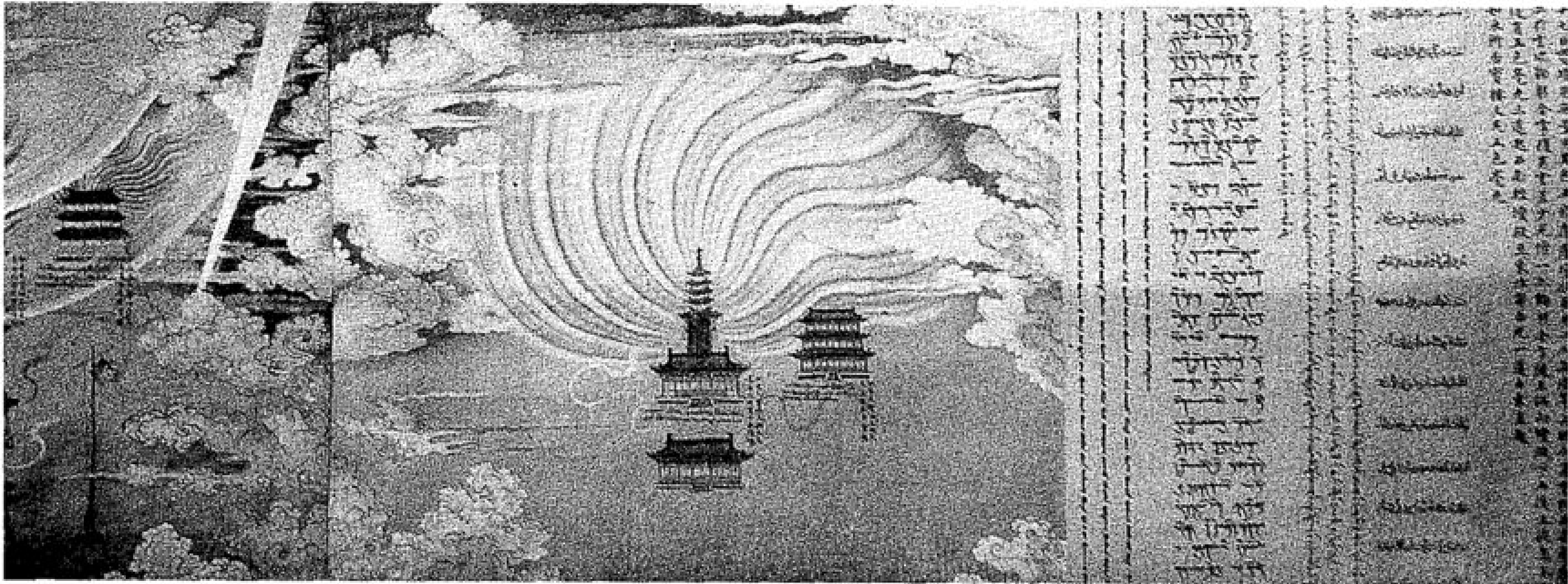
34, of his manual of art described the sGar-bris as follows:

The charm of the color is partly similar to a Chinese [painting], but [here the colors are] a bit more splendid than [in] that one. Everything receives dilute washes of excellent and soft shading. The face and eyes are lively. (X 33)
The bodies of lamas are rounded, and [ceremonial] hats are small. The layout mostly conforms with Chinese [paintings]. This is the tradition of the Karma encampment. (X 34)



Fig. 85. The Karma-pa De-bzhin-gshegs-pa. An early 15th-century Chinese xylographed depiction, Zhufopusa, dated 1431, after H. Karmay (1975), p. 64, fig. 46. Original in Musée Guimet, Paris, no. 46348 210 II. ▷

Figs. 86A and 86B. Details from the long scroll painting (4968×66 cm) showing wonders that occurred during the meeting of Karma-pa De-bzhin-gshegs-pa and the Emperor Yongle. After Tibetan Art Studies [journal in Chinese] vol. 25-3 (1992), inside front cover. ▽



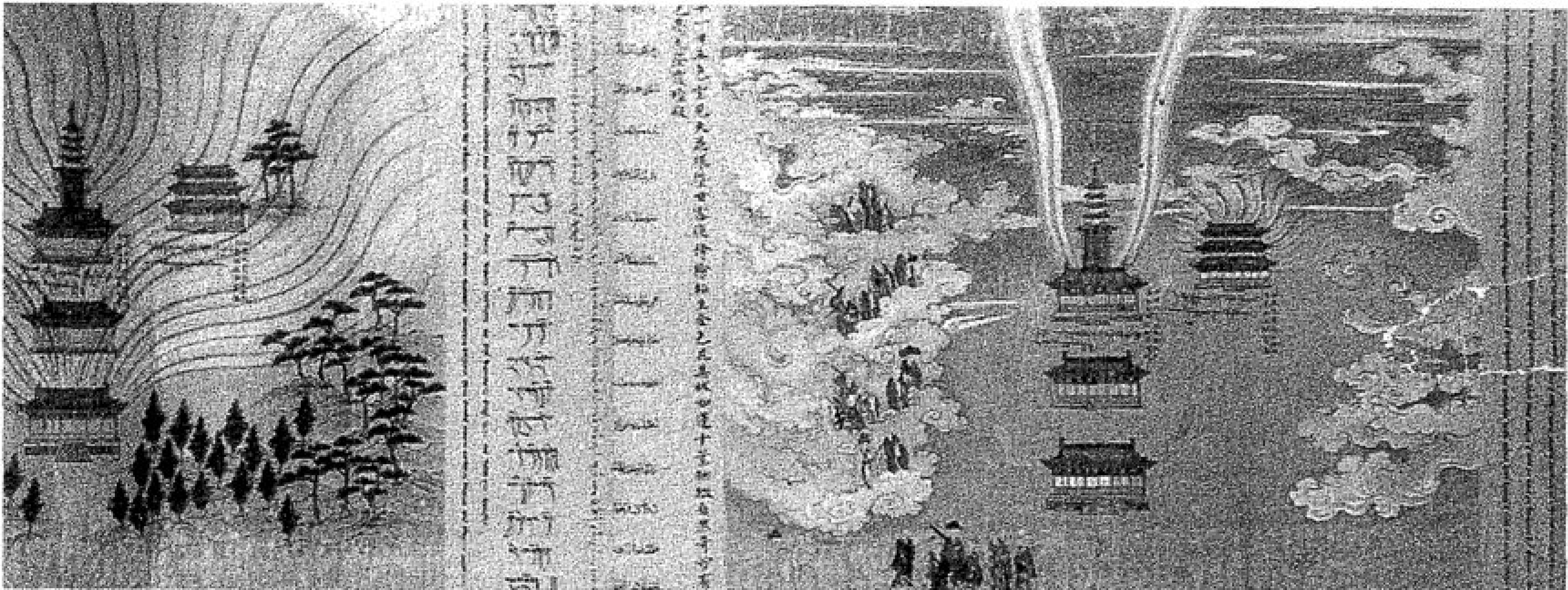




Fig. 87. The 5th Karma-pa De-bzhin-gshegs-pa. A modern redrawing of a Kar-shod-pa composition. After Karma Thinley (1980), p. 70. The details show the meeting between the Karma-pa and the Yongle emperor in 1407. See also P. Pal (1984), Pl. 92.

Chronological References

Several more precisely dateable references exist to Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis and his career.[383] As mentioned above, he completed in 1568 a painting in which, following instructions from the 5th Zhwa-dmar, he copied the wonderful work of sMan-thang-pa (the latter having been, in turn, the imitation of a noted Chinese Buddhist painting of gNas-rnying).[384] The biography of the 9th Karma-pa dBang-phyug-rdo-rje (1556–1603) further mentions him as an important painter active in painting murals of the Sixteen Elders in 1582 at mTshur-phu,[385] in 1583 (following the death of the Zhwa-dmar),[386] in 1591 (painting with his assistants a set of thangkas depicting the Zung-'jug lineage, under the sponsorship of gZhu dGe-legs rDzong),[387] and in 1599, when that set of paintings was completed and offered to the Karma-pa.[388] In that period, however, the sGar-bris was not the only painting style patronized by the great religious hierarch. As would be expected, the 9th Karma-pa also supported painters from the sMan-ris school (such as sMan-thang-pa dKon-mchog-phrin-las-lhun-grub at g.Yung in 1601–02),[389] as well as metal-workers from Nepal.[390] Nevertheless, within a generation or two, the style of Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis and his immediate successors—which was known later as the Old sGar-bris (*sgar bris rnying pa: sgar chen bris rnying*)[391]—became closely identified with the Karma-pa encampments and monasteries. Later still it gained a wider following that crossed some sectarian boundaries, at least in parts of Khams, as in 18th-century Derge.

Other Early Artists of the Karma-pa's Encampment

The Great Sculptor Karma-srid-bral

A "second sGar-bris" is also said to have existed in past centuries—i.e. in the 16th and possibly 17th centuries—namely the tradition of such artists as Karma-srid-bral and Karma-rin-chen. Their particular tradition later died out.[392] Among these early sGar-bris artists, Dwags-po sGo-pa zhal-ngo Karma-srid-bral alias sGo-smyon (d. 1591/92) was famed as one of the greatest, and like Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis he was renowned as being a pupil

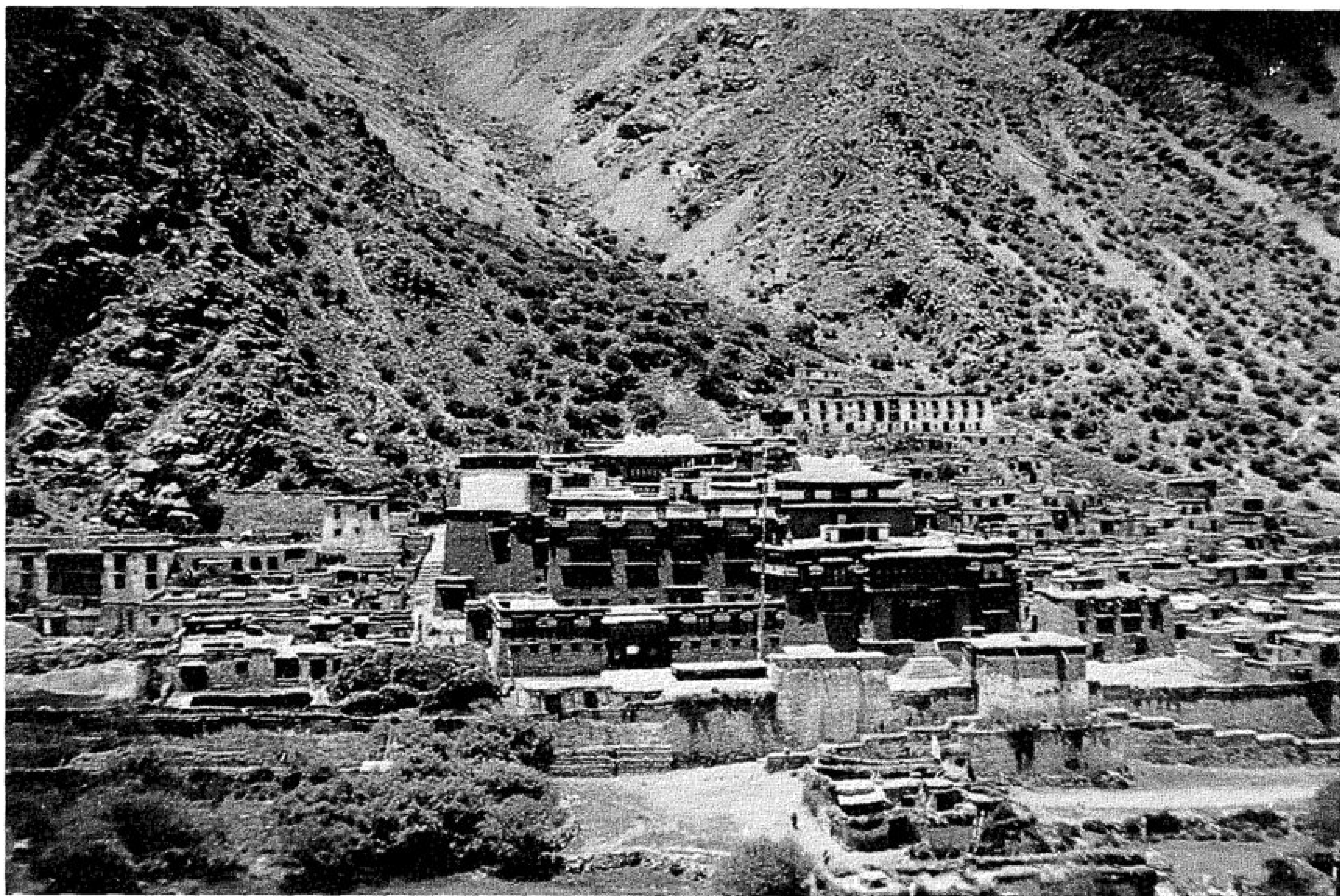


Fig. 88. mTshur-phu Monastery in 1946. Photograph courtesy of Hugh Richardson.

and even an emanation of the 8th Karma-pa, Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje. According to the Karma bka'-brgyud or "Kaṃ-tshang" historians, Karma-srid-bral founded the "Encampment tradition" (*sgar lugs*) of sculptured images.[393] A year after the death of Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje in 1554, there was set up a workshop under Karma-srid-bral's supervision for the making of the great master's reliquary stūpa. There the artist was described as "Karma-srid-bral, who possessed the virtue of innately acquired competence in both art and Buddhist doctrine."[394]

The titles by which he is later referred to (*nang so*, *sgo pa* and *zhal ngo*) mark him as having held a high secular position. He was entrusted in 1585 with the responsibility for making the great appliqué thangka called the "gos-sku 'Dzam-gling-mdzes-rgyan" at Tshur-phu, and it is said that subsequently a great marvel was witnessed at the time of sketching the great image, when the central vertical axis was being established on the supporting cloth.[395] When the Karma-pa was visiting southern Tibet in approximately late 1590, sGo-pa and his brother invited the great master to Rab-brtan-gling, where great offerings were made in memory of nang-so Don-yod-pa and the Karma-pa inspected (?) the newly made brocade appliqué thangka.[396] A mural of Vajradhara attributed to Karma-srid-bral and described as being in an "old sGar-bris style" survived until at least the early 20th century at Lho-brag Lha-lung.[397]

Karma-srid-bral died sometime in late 1591 or early 1592, and this fact was subsequently announced to the 9th Karma-pa, who had been in retreat, by a group of supplicants headed by the noble lady (*dpon sa*) sMin-grol-ba. These petitioners were admitted to see the Karma-pa, and the latter performed prayers of merit dedication for the deceased as requested. The brocade image offered to the Karma-pa at this time was subsequently given by him to Rab-brtan-gling monastery.[398]

Dwags-po rab-'byams-pa

A still earlier great artist of the Karma encampment was the master Dwags-po rab-'byams-pa Chos-rgyal-bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan (1449–1524), who flourished about a century before Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis. He was born at Nyag-nyi-klung near sGam-po in Dwags-po, and as a young monk he studied scholastic subjects at sKyed-tshal under the great Byams-chen rab-'byams-pa Sangs-rgyas-'phel. In addition to his mastery of the Kālacakra and calculations, he became extremely learned in the proportions of all types of sacred images as well as in artistic practice. Indeed, he was one of the most expert and diversely skilled artists at the court of the 7th Karma-pa. His painting style is said to have become absorbed into the main line of the sGar-bris tradition, namely that established by Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis.[399]

Karma-mchog-gyur-pa

Another painter at the Karma-pa court in this period was Karma-mchog-gyur-pa, the artist responsible for making a large curtain-thangka (*yol thang*) that was later preserved at mTshur-phu.[400] According to recent tradition, he was a contemporary of the 9th Karma-pa and thus probably flourished in the late 15th or early 16th century.[401] He also painted an eight-thangka set of the sequence of Karma-pas (*kar rabs*), and it too is preserved there.[402] The fact that this series of Karma-pa portraits only included eight paintings would correspond well with the proposed dating.

The existence of an Old sGar-bris of the late 15th or early 16th century is also confirmed from other references. Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, for instance, refers to paintings of the "Old sGar-bris of the [4th] Zhwa-dmar's time" (*zhwa dmar dus sgar bris rnying pa*), which were commissioned by the 4th Zhwa-dmar Chos-kyi-grags-pa (1453–1524). Two twenty-five-thangka sets of the bKa'-brgyud gser-phreng in this style survived at that Zhwa-dmar's monastic seat, Nyi-lde-dgon in Lho-brag.[403]

One such very exquisite set, kept in a chapel above the main assembly hall, was described as in "an old style of earlier times, the perfect divine forms of the old great encampment of the Karma-[pa], the same as the Yangs-pa-can gSer-phreng set now [ca. 1920] with the rGyal-tshab in mTshur-phu."[404]

Notes

[359] Or even the "Karma [bka'-brgyud] style" (*kar bris*), according to Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 110.

[360] See Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 65.6 (*na* 33a), where 'Be-lo sketches the life of Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis as follows: *sprul sku nam mkha' bkra shis ni/ yar stod du 'khrungs/ byis pa chung ngu'i dus nas rje nyid kyi sprul par zhal gyis bzhes/ sku gzugs kyi phrin las byed por lung bstan cing zhwa dmar lnga pas ljags bkod mdzad de sgar bris kyi srol btsugs pa'o//.* This passage, which was completed in 1775, is with De'u-dmar dge-bshes's account one of the oldest sources on this painter. The sDe-srid either overlooked him inadvertently or chose to ignore him and his tradition. Kong-sprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, pt. 1, p. 572.2 (*oṃ* 209a), follows 'Be-lo in stating that the 8th Karma-pa, Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, had also predicted such a future emanation: *rje mi bskyod zhabs kyis nyid kyi sprul pa sku gzugs kyi phrin las spel ba por lung bstan/*, adding that the Zhwa-dmar and rGyal-tshab gave instructions in this connection. See also Smith (1970), p. 40, n. 70.

[361] The sketching of murals by the 9th Karma-pa is mentioned in Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 103.5 (52b), who stated that many artists later painted his sketches. Kaḥ-thog Si-tu further described the style as a wonderful old sGar-bris: *khyams la zung 'jug brgyud rim/ thub dbang gnas brtan/ 'khrungs rabs brgya pa rnams dgu pa dbang phyug rdo rje'i skya bris lha bzo mang pos tshon btang ba sgar bris rnying ma mtshar/.* The 10th Karma-pa was later favorably impressed by some wall paintings that the 9th had done at gSung-rab-gling. See Karma-nges-don-bstan-rgyas, p. 423. Nevertheless, as mentioned below, some of the court artists teased the 9th Karma-pa about his paintings.

[362] Kong-sprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, pt. 1, p. 572.3 (*oṃ* 209a).

[363] See Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 241.5 (*na* 121a), where he is called g.Ye-pa sprul-sku dKon-phan-pa: *bzo bkod pa g.ye pa sprul sku dkon phan pas bgyis te/ gzhu'i dge legs rdzong du gser gdung gi bzo grwa btsugs shing/ 'brul lo'i nang du gser gdung bzhugs yul 'bras spungs mchod rten gyi gtsug lag khang rgya bskyed pa rnams sprul lo zla ba bcu gcig pa phan la gser gdung rten dang/ brten pa gzims mal sku 'dra dang bcas pa legs par grub....* See also Grags-pa-don-grub, p. 78a, who refers to him as "*g.ye pa sprul sku ba dkon mchog phan bde.*"

[364] For a list of the early abbots of the monastery 'Og-min Karma-dgon and the early Si-tu lamas, see Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 253–4 (*na* 127a-b).

[365] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 254.6 (*na* 127b): *shing rtsis ldebs bris sogs sprul sku phan bde dang tshe 'bum brtan rnams kyis/ 'du khang gi ldebs ris la mdzad brgya sogs rje chos kyi dbang phyug gis bkod yig mdzad de bris/.* See also *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 273.3 (*na* 137a).

[366] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 14.5 (7b): *logs bris skyes rabs rgyas [=brgya pa?]/ sgar bris rnying tshugs can/.*

[367] *Ibid.*, p. 17.2 (9a): *logs bris zhwa dmar chos kyi dbang phyug phyag bris sa ra ha pa byin can tshugs shin tu mtshar/ rgya bris yul bkod/.*

[368] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 269.2 (*na* 135a).

[369] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 45.

[370] The Zhwa-dmar dKon-mchog-yan-lag also did some painting himself. In 1563/64 he is said to have painted on a "canvas" (*ras gzhi*) a picture of the layout of gNas-nang monastery together with his own encampment. See Si-tu and 'Be-lo, p. 99.5 (*na* 50a).

[371] Gega Lama (1983), vol. 1, pp. 35: *zhwa dmar dkon mchog yan lag dang/ rgyal tshab grags pa don grub kyis/ 'das lo 1118 phyi lo 1407 lor tā ming g.yung lo rgyal pos/ chos rje de bzhin gshegs pa la phul ba'i si thang dang/ gzhan yang/ g.yung lo la karma pa rang byung rdo rjes* [=rje] *zla ba'i dbus nas zhal gzigs shing/ bzo bo khrom tshogs dang bcas pas thun mong tu mjal skabs kyi 'dra 'bag bris pa/ karma zla shar ma grags pa dang/ yer pa rwa ba ma grags pa'i gnas bcu sogs la dpe mdzad de/ sku tshugs rgya gar dang mthun pa/ tshon mdangs rgya nag dang mthun pa/ yul bkod bod lugs su grags pa/ yul chen po gsum gyi yon tan rnams phyogs gcig tu 'dus pa/ 'di ltar du bris zhes zhal bkod mdzad/ nam mkha' bkra shis nas de bzhin du bris te rgyun spel ba la/ karma sgar bris zhes pa'i mtshan du grags/.* It would be very interesting to trace Gega Lama's sources for this.

[372] On the paintings resulting from this meeting, see also H. Karmay (1975), p. 79, and E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), p. 52. H. E. Richardson (1958), p. 148, in his study of the Karma-pa sect mentioned that he had studied and photographed the famous painting at mTshur-pu in 1949 and described it as being in "the meticulously elegant Ming style." The painting was very large, measuring approximately 50 by 2.5 feet, and it contained inscriptions in five languages. Richardson presents the Tibetan text from the scroll in Appendix A of his article. According to Matthew Kapstein (Leibnitz, June 1995), this painting was shown a few years ago in an exhibition in Beijing and was also described in an article in the art-history and archeology journal *Wenwu.* See also the Chinese journal *Xizang Yishu Yanjiu, Tibetan Art Studies* (Lhasa, Tibetan: *Bod ljongs sgyu rtsal zhib 'jug*). Vol. 25-3 (1992), inside cover. (Compare above, Figs. 86A, 86B, and 87, for similar depictions of palaces.)

[373] See also Ariane Macdonald (1977), p. 148, who translates *nga'i 'dra 'bag* as "statue qui me resemble."

[374] Another wonderful thangka made in China, an appliqué of the Buddha designed by the 4th Karma-pa Rol-pa'i-rdo-rje (1340–1383), is mentioned by dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-'phreng-ba (1986 ed.), pp. 966f. It was offered

to that Karma-pa and brought back to Tibet after his visit to the last Mongol emperor Toγon Temür (reigned 1338–1368). See further Y. Tanaka(1994), p. 873. As mentioned above, Rol-pa'i-rdo-rje is said by one later source (Kaḥ-thog Si-tu) to have played a role in the planning (*bkod pa*) of the circumambulatory-passage (*bskor lam*) murals at Zhwa-lu depicting the so-called "Hundred Deeds of the Buddha" (*mdzad pa brgya*). See R. Vitali (1990), p. 107.

[375] For further references to these important 10th- or 11th-century paintings, see Tucci (1949), vol. 2, pp. 556f. and 563; E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), p. 48f.; and Rhie and Thurman (1991), p. 102. The influence of these paintings was felt in Tibet as early as the 12th century; they were taken as models by the bKa'-gdams-pa master Se sPyil-bu-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1121–1184), founder of the New 'Chad-kha monastery. See L. S. Dagyab (1977), vol. 1, p. 62. Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 111, mentions that the 10th Karma-pa also later used these same works of art as a model, as is described below. Such copying of sets of the Elders was also a well-known tradition within Chinese painting history. See M. Rhie in Rhie and Thurman (1991), p. 66, n. 12.
This famed chapel dedicated to the Sixteen Elders at the old temple complex of Yer-pa (northeast of Lhasa, founded in the early 11th c.) is also mentioned in A. Ferrari et al. (1958), p. 104, n. 99. For further references to Yer-pa see E. De Rossi Filibeck (1984) and T. Huber (1992), p. 493, n. 2. Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 138 (69b), describes the Yer-pa temple as located a bit below the other Yer-pa sites, being the temple of the Sixteen Elders containing the thangka "invited" from China by Klu-mes 'Brom-chung (fl. 10th-early 11th c.). The central figure in the temple was an image of the Buddha Śākyamuni one story tall in an archaic style. The depictions of the Sixteen Elders were life-size, of amiable appearance and in a Chinese style. The Tibetan: *de nas mar ring tsam phyin par klu mes 'brom chung gis rgya nag nas gdan drangs pa'i zhal thang nang gzhug yer pa'i gnas bcu khang du/ dbus su thub dbang thog so mtho nges gcig sngon gyi bzo rnying/ gnas bcu rgya nag ma bag dro mi tshad re/.* The set of paintings known as the Yer-pa rwa-ba-ma is also compared in passing by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 411.3 (206a), to a depiction found in the Zhwa-lu gNas-brtan-lha-khang designed by Bu-ston. The chief figure in Zhwa-lu was a life-sized Buddha, with two main attendants. The minor figures included the Sixteen Elders. The style in which the throne and "back-curtain" (*rgyab yol*) of each was depicted was reminiscent of the Yer-pa rwa-ba-ma, Kaḥ-thog Si-tu observed. Behind each was a great empty space surrounded by a fringe of rocky crags high above. The Tibetan: *bu ston zhal bkod gnas brtan lha khang ka brgyad/ thub dbang mi tshad gtso 'khor/ gnas brtan khri rgyab yol bcas yer pa rwa ba ma 'dra/ rgyab mthon po nas brag ri'i bskor ba'i bar sa stong chen po can/.* Elsewhere Kaḥ-thog Si-tu referred, p. 77.4 (39a), to "Brag-ri-ma" clay statues of the Elders at Rwa-sgreng (*gnas brtan brag ri ma 'jim sku*), i.e. to figures placed amidst a background of "rocky-mountains" (*brag ri*).

[376] I have not yet located them. Gega Lama, Bodhnath, April 1995, stated that he had heard these accounts as a student while studying under Thang-bla-tshe-dbang in Derge.

[377] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 109.3 (*na* 55a): *phag mo rtser gnas rnying gi si thang las sman thang pas bshus pa'i ston pa'i mdzad thang ri mo bkod pa khyad mtshar la lha bzo nam bkras la de 'dra ba zhig brir bzhengs bkas gnang ltar legs par grub pa'i zhal yig dang/ bsngags pa'i tshul du mdzad pa bcu gnyis rnam gzhag mdor bsdus dang/ sangs rgyas kyi bral smin gyi yon tan ston pa'i gzhung rnams bkrol ba dar zab la gser gyi yi ger bkod pa zhal thang gi g.yas g.yon du bkram chog pa bcas mdzad/.* I am indebted to L. van der Kuijp for this reference.

[378] Kong-sprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, pt. 1, p. 572.3 (*oṃ* 209a): *tā ming dus kyi si thang bzhin yul ljongs bkod pa sogs dang tshon mdangs mdzad pa la sgar bris su grags pa'i bri rgyun 'di byung/.*

[379] Si-tu, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 85.7 (*a* 43a): *'du khang du sprul* [43b] *nam mkha' bkra shis pa'i gnas bcu ldebs ris spus legs mtshan byang la rgya nag skad yod pa//.*

[380] E. G. Smith (1970), pp. 44f., n. 77, quotes bDud-'dul-rdo-rje: *rim gyis tshon srab nyams 'gyur khyad par can// nam bkris phyag bris sgar ris zhes su grags//.*

[381] Kong-sprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, pt. 1, p. 572.3 (*oṃ* 209a): *rus tshugs rgya gar li ma dang sman thang lugs gzhir bzhag pa ....*

[382] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 111.4, quoting Khra-'gu Rin-po-che.

[383] As E. G. Smith (1970) noted, the Karma-pa biographies by Karma-nges-don-bstan-rgyas (p. 394.2 =197b) mention Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis as a disciple of the 8th Karma-pa. The same work also mentions Karma-srid-bral in the same passage. Both artists were likewise mentioned in the earlier Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo history (1775), vol. 2, p. 55.1 (*da* 28a) among a list of seven special disciples of the 8th Karma-pa who were empowered by him and who served him (*byin brlabs zhugs shing zhabs tog bsgrub pa'i slob ma*). Both Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis and Karma-srid-bral were also said to be "emanations" (*sprul pa*) of the 8th Karma-pa. Normally this would imply that they had been born after his passing, but here it seems that Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis (b. 1540s?) as a boy actually met the 8th Karma-pa. Cf. Dagyab (1977), p. 37.

[384] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 109.3 (*na* 55a).

[385] See Grags-pa-don-grub, rGyal-tshab IV, ff. 32b (1582), 52a (1591) and 67b (1599). The same work is reproduced almost verbatim in Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, pp. 146–242. For this passage see vol. 2, p. 180.2 (*na* 90b): *de nas nang sos khang thog bar chings thon pas re zhig sgar chen*

phebs ma dgos par slar mtshur phu nyid du phebs shing/ nam bkras pa la mchod gong gi khyams su gnas brtan bcu drug gi logs bris bgyid du bcug/.

[386] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, pp. 182.7–183.2 (*na* 91b-92a): *de nas sku gdung gi mchod rten rin po che bzhengs pa'i rgyu dang 'bad pa gang ci'i thugs khur rgyal ba nyid nas bzhes pa'i phyag g.yog lag len pa kha dkar dpon gzim dpon pas bgyis shing/ bkod pa dang mgo lung bzo rig pa nam bkras sogs sbrel por bkas bkos te....*

[387] *Ibid.*, pp. 207.5 (*na* 104a): *g.yung dar rgyas su phebs skabs dge 'dun 'og min gling pa'i dgon gnas 'debs pa'i bkod khyab do dam dang/ zhar du thugs dam rten zung 'jug brgyud pa'i zhal thang dras mnyam bzhengs par sprul sku ba nam bkras dpon slob rnams rdzong ba gnang ste/.* Grags-pa-don-grub, p. 52b: *de nas g.yung dar rgyas su dge 'dun 'og min gling pa'i dgon gnas 'debs pa'i bkod pa do dam du sgo pa nang so skyabs gnas dang/ gzhu dge legs rdzong nas mthun rkyen gnang ste rgyal ba nyid kyi thugs dam rten zung 'jug brgyud pa'i zhal thang drangs mnyam bzhengs par sprul sku ba nam mkha' bkra shis dpon slob rnams rdzong ba gnang ste....*

[388] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 227.7 (*na* 114a): *nam bkras pas grong 'jug brgyud pa'i zhal thang rnams grub pa phyag tu phul/.* See also Grags-pa-don-grub, p. 67b.

[389] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 233 (*na* 117a). The 5th Zhwa-dmar in 1569 further patronized the artist sMan-thang dPal-bkras-pa-lags. See Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 110.2 (*na* 55b).

[390] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 183.2 (*na* 92a), referring to the erection of the reliquary stūpa after the death of the Zhwa-dmar Rin-po-che: *bal po bdun sogs kyis bde chen du bzo gra btsugs shing/ dngul gdung bzhugs yul mkhar las kyi zhal ta'ang gnang/.*

[391] Paintings identified as such are mentioned by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu for instance on p. 96.4 (48b): *ngos bris sgar bris rnying pa tshugs legs*; p. 103.6 (52a); p. 330.6 (165b) (at Lho-brag Nyi-lde-mgon): *bka' brgyud gser phreng zhal thang nyer lnga zhwa dmar [chos grags] dus sgar bris rnying pa sogs gos jus mtha' can sngon gyi lha shin tu khyad 'phags*; and p. 341.2 (171a) (at Lho-brag Lha-lung:) *ngos bris sgar chen bris rnying kar ma srid bral gyi rdo rje 'chang....* Other perhaps similar styles at Karma-dgon are referred to as "*sgar bris rnying tshug[s] can*" on pp. 14.6 (7b), and on p. 19.5 (10a), one finds a reference to: *zung 'jug brgyud rim logs bris sgar bris rnying tshugs shin tu legs.*

[392] Gega Lama (1983), vol. 1, p. 36.

[393] Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 65.7 (*na* 33a): *dwags po sgo pa'i zhal ngo karma srid bral lam sgo smyon zhes pa ni/ rje nyid kyi sku'i sprul par grags pa des sgar lugs sku gzugs 'bur bzo'i srol btsugs pa yin no//.* He is also described in similar terms by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 103.6 (52a): *mi bskyod rdo rje'i lha bzo sprul pa karma pa srid bral phyag bzo 'chams sku gsar pa/.*

[394] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 83.4 (*na* 22a): *bzo dang nang don rig pa la lhan skyes kyi spobs pa dge ba can kar ma srid bral.*

[395] Grags-pa-don-grub, 35a: *gos sku khams gsum mdzes rgyan gyi bzo mgo 'dzugs pa'i sta gon gnang ste rim pas bzo bkod dang mgo lung do dam pa nang so sgo pa karma srid bral dang rje dbon phyag mdzod par sku rgyu rtsis sprod sogs gnang nas zla ba brgyad pa'i tshes bzhi'i nyin bla g.ye chen mor rgyab ras la ston pa'i sku brnyan skya bris kyi tshangs thig gnang ba'i tshe ... 'ja' 'od de nyid tshangs thig gi steng du zug pa'i ltas khyad par can yang byung zer/.* See also Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 181 (*na* 91a).

[396] Grags-pa-don-grub, p. 50b: *sgo nas nang so karma srid bral mched kyi spyan 'dren rim par 'byor ba bzhin rab dga' bde chen nas bteg ste skyil skyes dgon brgyud rim pas rab brtan gling du phebs pa na nang so don yod kyi rjes su dmigs pa'i 'bul chen sogs bgyis shing/ ston pa'i gos gsar bzhengs la phyag nas zhus/.* See also Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, pp. 205f.

[397] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 341.2 (171a), seen at Lho-brag Lha-lung: *ngos bris sgar chen bris rnying kar ma srid bral gyi rdo rje 'chang....*

[398] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 211.3 (*na* 106a): *sku mtshams khrol tsam mdzad nas nang so sgo pa srid bral ba 'das pa'i bsngo zhus su dpon sa smin grol ba dpon g.yog byon par mjal kha dang bsngo smon gyi rgyas 'debs gnang/ des phul ba'i gos sku rab brtan gling du bzhugs par bstsal/ sgo pas phul ba'i 'bri phyugs mang po rnams dang/....* This account goes on to state that the many domestic animals offered by (the deceased) sGo-pa were used by the Karma-pa for making (butter lamp?) offerings in the reliquary stūpa which housed the remains of his own main teacher. I am indebted to E. G. Smith for this reference.

[399] See Gega Lama (1983), vol. 1, p. 36. A brief biography is found in Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 1, pp. 654–5 (*da* 328a-b). He served for some time as abbot of Yer-pa. The 7th Karma-pa highly esteemed him and granted him a green ceremonial hat. Some of his doctrinal writings survive.

[400] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 110.2 (55b): *karma mchog gyur pa'i sgar chen yol thang zung 'jug brgyud rim ches ngo mtshar sogs....*

[401] Tenga Rinpoche, Swayambhunath, March 1995.

[402] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 109 (55a): *karma mchog gyur bris kar rab[s] thang ka brgyad can dang/.*

[403] See *ibid.*, pp. 330.6f. and 333.3.

[404] *Ibid.*, p. 333.4.

Chapter 6

'Phreng-kha-ba and Other Outstanding sMan-ris Artists of the 16th and 17th Centuries

The sMan-ris was thus a point of departure for and a strong early influence on the great sGar-bris founder Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis. In subsequent periods it also similarly influenced such masters as the 10th Karma-pa and Si-tu Paṇ-chen of the 17th and 18th centuries, who studied it initially and then mainly followed other styles. Meanwhile the sMan-ris tradition proper also continued to flourish in its own right. Since its foundation in the mid 15th century, the tradition was carried forward both by artists from the sMan-thang-pa family and by an ever-widening stream of other great artists. Furthermore, the sMan-ris tradition as it was later developed and handed down by subsequent masters became the basis for a number of regional schools, and thus its offshoots became the styles that predominated throughout most of Tibet in modern times.

'Phreng-kha-ba or Ri-mkhar-ba

One outstanding upholder of the sMan-ris tradition in the 16th century was Ri-mkhar-ba dPal-ldan-blo-gros-bzang-po. He was from rTa-nag Ri-mkhar-ba in gTsang and he is found among the main artists mentioned in the biographies of both the 2nd and 3rd Dalai Lamas. This "lord of painters" (*pir thogs dbang po*) is mentioned, for instance, as the main artist commissioned to paint the murals of the assembly hall at Chos-'khor rGyal (in 'Ol-kha, north of the gTsang-po about forty kilometers east of rTse-thang) in the summer of 1536 under the patronage and supervision of dGe-'dun-rgya-mtsho (1475–1542, posthumously recognized as the 2nd Dalai Lama).[405] At that time, dGe-'dun-rgya-mtsho specified that sprul-sku Ri-mkhar-ba was to do all the sketches by himself and that the rest of the painters were to imitate his painting style so that the finished group of murals would all be in a single unified style.[406] In the summer, when the paintings were finished, that same great lama visited the monastic assembly hall and remarked with pleasure on the stylistic unity that the painters had been able to achieve, in contrast with the stylistic inconsist-



Fig. 89. dGe-'dun-rgya-mtsho, 2nd Dalai Lama. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 853.

encies found in the older murals of Tashilhunpo, where each artist had followed his own style.[407] dGe-'dun-rgya-mtsho took a close interest in works of religious art and could also sketch himself.[408] His preference for Ri-mkhar-ba's work speaks strongly for the latter's excellence. Ri-mkhar-ba is in fact called the "emanation of Viśvakarma, lord of painters"[409] in the passage describing his and his colleagues' painstaking painting of the murals at Chos-'khor rGyal.[410] He may have been the "Blo-gros-bzang-po" who requested dGe-'dun-rgya-mtsho to write a brief summary of the *bKa' gdams legs bam,* which the latter composed at 'Bras-spungs with the help of the scribe dPal-'byor-legs.[411]

The biography of the 3rd Dalai Lama, bSod-nams-rgya-mtsho (1543–1588), also mentions Ri-mkhar-ba as a great artist.[412] Still other sources record that he wrote a treatise on religious art and iconometry called the *mDo rgyud gsal ba'i me long* ("A Mirror That Illumines the Sūtras and Tantras"),[413] and this work, which he composed at 'Bras-spungs, survives down to the present.[414] He also wrote a treatise specifically on the proportions of stūpas, maṇḍalas, etc.[415]

bSod-nams-rgya-mtsho's biography (written by the 5th Dalai Lama) contains other mentions of a great artist with the same personal name: 'Phreng-kha-ba dPal-ldan-blo-gros-bzang-po. In about 1558–59, this 'Phreng-kha-pa was called upon to paint a special thangka depicting sprul-sku mThong-ba-don-ldan, which the gNas-chung oracle had indicated as highly desirable and for which the oracle gave detailed versified directions, as recounted in full in the biography.[416]

This painter was not only an intimate disciple of the 2nd and 3rd Dalai Lamas, but he was also skilled in elegant poetical and prose composition: he composed a biography of his master, entitled *Lha yi rgyal pos zhus pa'i skal ldan shing rta,* and a poem by his hand that he inscribed on the wall of the residence quarters (*gzims chung*) of dGe-'dun-rgya-mtsho in the dormitory (*grwa khang*) of Chos-'khor-gling has also survived (see Appendix I). On another occasion when he was beginning to paint a thangka of the goddess Sarasvatī, 'Phreng-kha-pa thought to check her technical description as given in a meditation text, but at that moment the goddess herself appeared before him and called out, "O artist, here I am! Look!" Afterward he became known as the artist "Look at Me" (*sprul sku nga la gzigs*).[417]

Since 'Phreng-kha-pa flourished in the same time and milieu as sprul-sku Ri-mkhar-ba and wrote a treatise with contents and title identical to that ascribed to the latter, one can identify the two as the same person, just as the much later Guru bKra-shis and the A-mdo bibliographer A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho (1803–1875) did.[418] Already the 5th Dalai Lama identified dPal-ldan-blo-gros-bzang-po and sprul-sku Ring-mkhar-ba [*sic*] in one work as being the same author of a basic manual in the tradition of sMan-bla-don-grub, and elsewhere he refers to him as 'Phrang-kha-pa [*sic*].[419] Ri-mkhar-ba alias 'Phreng-kha-ba perhaps lived from about 1500 to 1570. The 3rd Dalai Lama had prophesied that Ri-mkhar-ba's life span would be about seventy years, and that he would experience some difficulties in his sixtieth year, a bird year (1561, the iron-bird year?).[420] The death of 'Phreng-kha-ba occurred in or after circa 1570, since his biography of the 3rd Dalai Lama ends in the iron-horse year (1570).[421]

Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang of lDan-ma

From among the sMan-ris painters of the eastern Tibetan district of Khams in the 16th century, one of the most accomplished was Bla-ma Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang of lDan-ma. A number of facts about his career are preserved in the autobiography of Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen (1697–1774) because Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang was the brother of one of Zhu-chen's direct ancestors.[422] Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang, who also bore the name Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho, was born in the lDan-khog region of Khams into a family of minor nobility ultimately descended from the Zhang-pa clan.[423] Descendants of this clan were traditionally said to be very good at learning and in various arts and sciences. At Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang's birth, the sacred character "a," symbol of the absolute, was clearly visible on the thumb of his right hand.

His family adhered to the Karma bka'-brgyud-pa religious tradition. He accordingly received monastic ordination and studied various subjects under the 8th Karma-pa, Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje (1507–1554). His close connection with that Karma-pa is also witnessed to by the fact that Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang was the disciple at whose request that Karma-pa composed a series of detailed biographies of the teachers in the Karma Kaṃ-tshang lineage. Because Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang became learned in the proportions and iconography of the various deities, his teacher the Karma-pa prophesied that great benefit and success would come about if he concentrated on painting. This Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang did, taking religious painting as his main meditative practice.

Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang for some time stayed at the Lho Karma-dgon monastery. There he painted all the powerful blessing-bestowing murals of lamas and divinities found in a certain small two-pillared meditation house (*sgrub khang*) there. He also stayed a long time in retreat in that same place, it is said. Later nobody who was not a full monk and who had not completed a retreat was allowed into that retreat chapel.

Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang was afterwards summoned by the Sa-skya bDag-chen 'Jam-pa'i-dbyangs Rin-chen-rgyal-mtshan to paint the murals of Sa-dkar in lDan-ma, and from then on he dwelled at Chu-sribs. Working together with only his nephew, the monk dGe-'dun-'od-zer, he completed all the murals in the twenty-pillar temple erected at Sa-dkar. When advanced in age, Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang also painted some four major mural sections (*zhing khams*) in the gSer-gdung-khang of mKhar-dkar-po.[424]

Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang also composed a work on iconometric technique entitled *bsKor thig gi 'grel pa mthong ba don ldan*, and the style that he worked in was the Old sMan-ris (*sman rnying*).[425] It would be interesting to know to what extent his studies under the 8th Karma-pa Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje influenced the development of his painting style or his writings in connection with art. Although that Karma-pa was not famed as a great practicing artist, he did write an important treatise on religious art entitled *Nyi ma chen po'i me long* ("Mirror of the Great Sun").[426] Furthermore, another of that Karma-pa's religious students was the sprul-sku sMan-thang-pa ('Jam-pa'i-dbyangs?).[427] If the relevant writings of Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang and the 8th Karma-pa ever become available, it may be possible to trace the links between them more concretely at least in their iconometric theories. One would expect to find that the fundamental treatise of sMan-bla-don-grub had shaped the opinions of both.

Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang's nephew, the monk dGe-'dun-'od-zer, was considered to be just as skilled in painting as his uncle. Soon after his uncle's passing, dGe-'dun-'od-zer made a special thangka in commemoration of his death, and for the border frame (*gong gsham*) he used a saffron monk's cloak that had been given by Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje. This and many other wonderful paintings attributed to him could still be seen in the mid 1700s.[428]

Another of Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang's chief disciples was lha-bzo rTa-mgrin-mgon-po. Two hundred years later in the 1760s the latter's followers were still painting in Khams lDan-ma, and they included the master painters lha-bzo-ba dge-slong Ye-shes-blo-gros, Ye-shes-chos-'grub, and Sangs-rgyas-rin-chen. But by that time the tradition had received the influence of such sMan-gsar-ba masters as Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho and Lho-brag-pa.[429]

Yet another of Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang's disciples, this one from the latter period of his life, was a certain mKhar-ri-gdong dbon-po rgya-bo, whose sons were mKha'-'gro-skyabs (the layman) and a monk. Both sons were involved to different degrees in producing religious art, as were their descendants or successors.[430]

'Brug-chen Padma-dkar-po and Two Other 'Brug-pa Hierarchs

Roughly contemporaneous with 'Phreng-kha-ba and Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang there lived the famous 'Brug-pa master Padma-dkar-po (1527–1592), who not only wrote treatises on religious art but also painted himself.[431] He is reputed to have



Fig.90. Brug-chen Padma-dkar-po. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 1051 (a).

worked in the sMan-ris style, although he also had many contacts with mKhyen-ris artists.[432]

During the three year period when he was building the large temple at bKra-shis-mthong-smon, he supported a group of about seventy artisans and workers. In the final year, during the painting of the murals of the protectors' temple, there was a shortage of the orange pigment minium. One night Padma-dkar-po dreamt that five Mongols, who were dressed in robes like the Chinese emperor and wearing excellent white turbans, gave him some minium, went into the protector's shrine, and then became absorbed into the murals. The next day he received a large packet of minium pigment from abroad.[433] The major supervisor for the mural painting then was the Yar-rgyab-pa sprul-sku bSod-nams-rgya-mtsho.[434]

It seems that the great 'Brug-pa hierarchs of the 16th and 17th centuries traditionally patronized painters from both sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris lineages. According to the autobiography of the later 'Brug-chen dPag-bsam-dbang-po (1593–1651), when the murals were repainted at bKra-shis-mthong-smon in 1630, both sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris styles were employed. Three Newar artisans are also mentioned as having participated in this project.[435]

One of the northern 'Brug-pa hierarchs who is known for his artistic skills was Mi-pham-dbang-po (1642–1715). His biography records that in his fiftieth year he himself painted a remarkable thangka depicting the early lineal masters of the bKa-brgyud tradition.[436] Another thangka he painted, one of White Tārā, was later deposited in the memorial stūpa of Si-tu Paṇ-chen.[437]

Great sMan-ris Masters in Central Tibet from the Mid 16th until the Late 17th Century

One great artist born in sMan-thang during the mid 1500s was a certain sMan-thang dPal-bkras-pa-lags (=dPal-ldan-bkra-shis?). The 5th Zhwa-dmar dKon-mchog-yan-lag (1525–1583) patronized him in 1569 at Yangs-pa-can, having him make a very costly image of Avalokiteśvara (Khasarpāṇi) using pearls on *ta-hung* silk.[438]

Also in the 16th century the Karma bka'-brgyud teacher and historian dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-'phreng-ba (1504–1566) painted or commissioned a number of murals of tantric deities at Lho-brag Sras-mkhar-dgu-thog, including to the rear of the temple a painting of Mar-pa the Translator surrounded by the Zhwa-nag and Zhwa-dmar Karma-pas. The paintings were described by a later visitor as being in a sort of mixed sMan-ris and Nepalese manner, and in an extremely wonderful style (*tshugs shin tu ngo mtshar ba*).[439]

Another great sMan-ris artist who flourished slightly later was a painter sometimes referred to simply as "sMan-thang-pa." The 3rd Dalai Lama bSod-nams-rgya-mtsho in about 1577 instructed this painter to paint in as fine and exquisite a manner as possible (*gzabs bris*) a thangka of the Protector and a large retinue. The same source mentions that soon afterward a "Blo-bzang-pa from sMan-thang" returned home.[440]

The great painter sMan-bla chos-kyi-rje Blo-bzang-pa (perhaps the same "Blo-bzang-pa from sMan-thang") was the leader of a group of some thirteen artists who assisted the 1st Paṇ-chen bla-ma Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1567–

Fig. 91. The temple of Sras-mkhar-dgu-thog in Lho-brag. Detail after Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 20.

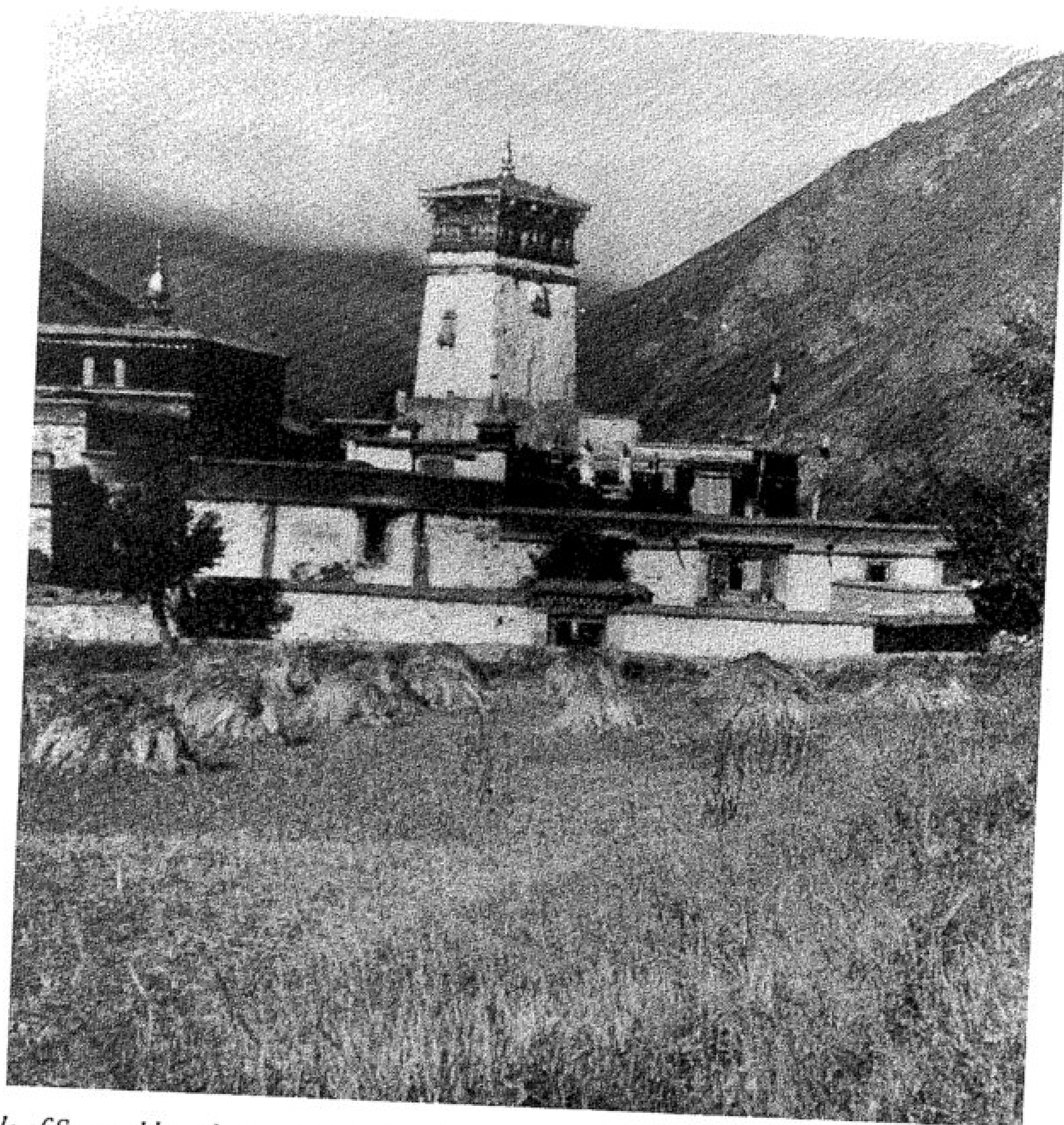


Fig. 92. The temple of Sras-mkhar-dgu-thog. After Snellgrove and Richardson (1968), p. 40. Photograph H. E. Richardson.

1662) in 1600 during the renovation of Gangs-can monastery southwest of Shigatse. At that time—probably while viewing the murals still in progress—the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che accidentally slipped and fell from atop a two-story scaffolding and was "anointed" with the spray of light-blue paint when he landed among the color pots two stories below. Miraculously, he was not seriously hurt by the fall. (The lama in his autobiography interpreted this accident as a probable sign of the protective Goddess's displeasure at the presence of several children and lay women among the group who had been working within the main assembly hall of the monastery grinding colors for the painters.[441])

The religious master (*chos kyi rje*) dKon-mchog-lhun-grub and his nephew were two of the other leading painters who worked together with sMan-bla chos-kyi-rje Blo-bzang-pa in 1600 at the restoration of Gangs-can in gTsang.[442] The artist sMan-thang-pa dKon-mchog-'phrin-las-lhun-grub-pa together with his assistants also painted murals and decorated a monastery at g.Yung in 1601–02 for the 9th Karma-pa dBang-phyug-rdo-rje (1556–1603).[443] Perhaps this same artist was the "sku-mdun sMan-thang-pa" mentioned as one of the main witnesses of the casting of a great Maitreya image, together with the 1st Paṇ-chen Lama, in around 1606.[444] The 5th Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho (1617–1682) in his autobiography also mentions a learned master called "sMan-thang sku-mdun Lhun-grub-pa," who was active in the period circa 1621 when the search was going on for the next Dalai Lama and before the young Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho himself had been identified and confirmed as such.[445]

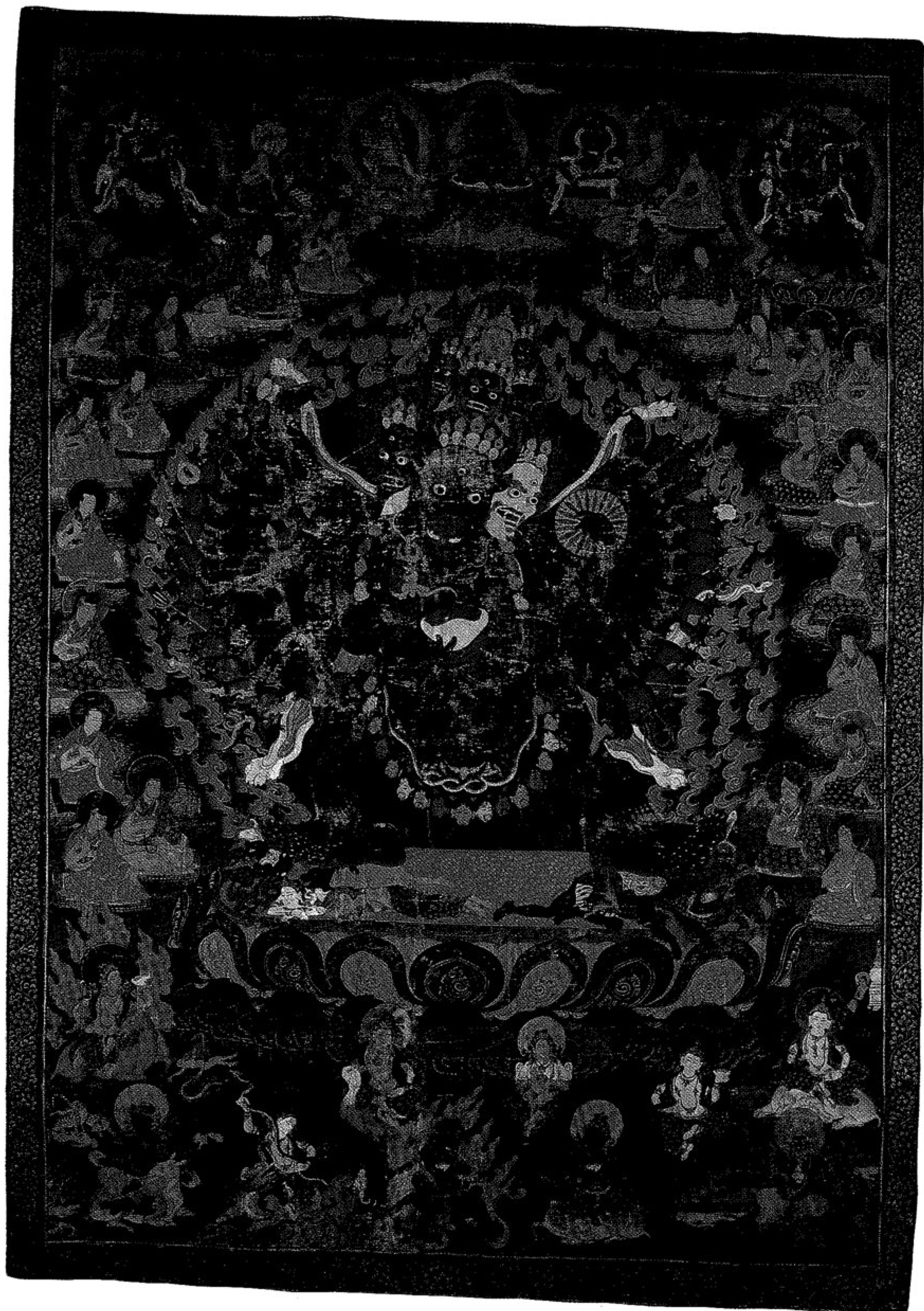
Also mentioned in connection with the 3rd Dalai Lama in a passage from his biography (referring to the time ca. 1612) was the artist sprul-sku dGos-skyes—though it is not sure he belonged to the sMan-ris tradition. It is said that the "chamberlain-regent" bSod-nams-rab-brtan (d. 1657) used a large gold nugget as the material for commissioning a golden thangka (*gser thang*) of the thirty-five Buddhas executed by that artist.[446] The same painter (*ri mo ba*) dGos-skyes-rdo-rje is said to have been active after the death of the 4th Dalai Lama (d. 1616), planning the latter's reliquary stūpa.

Artistic Activities at Jo-nang

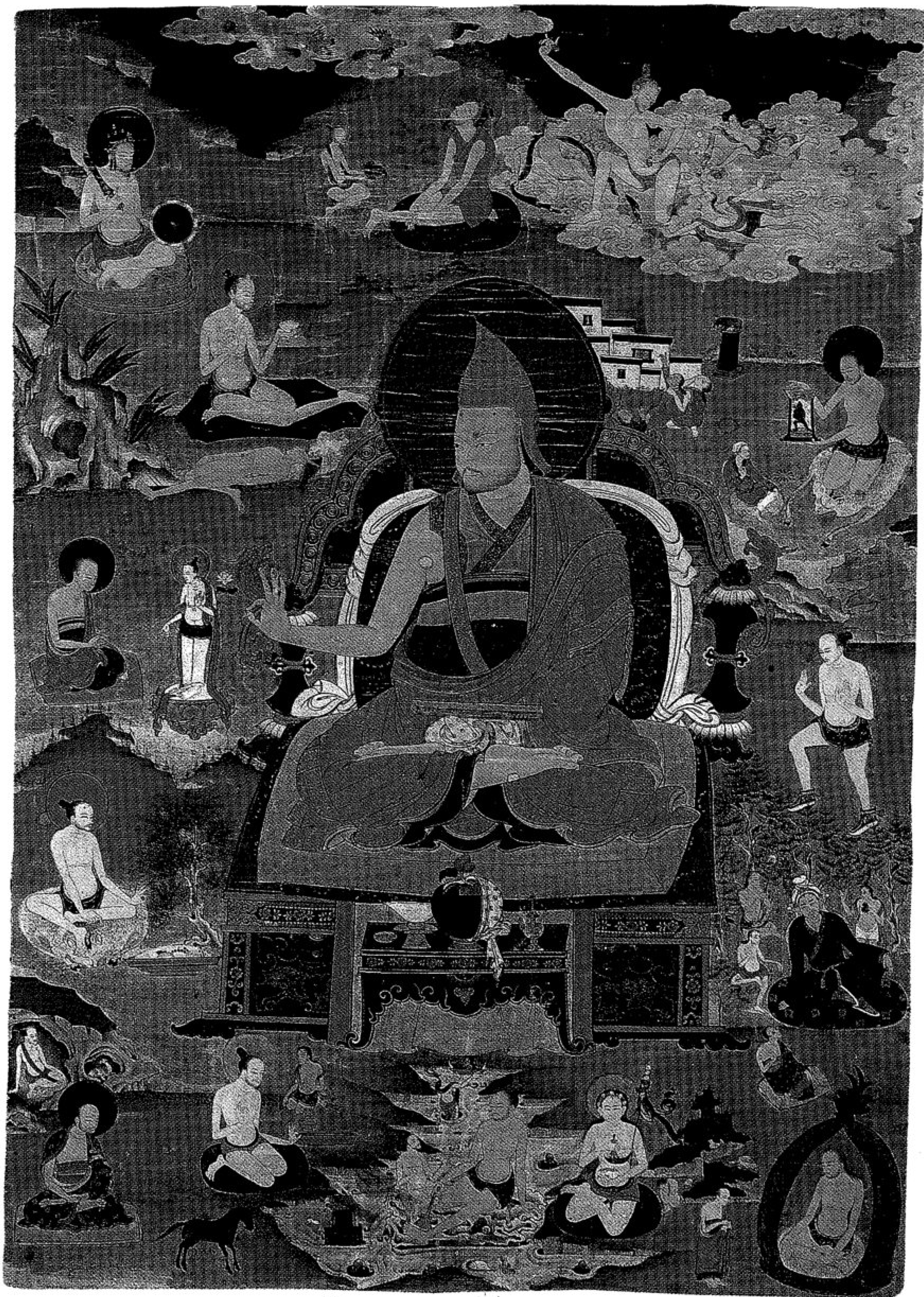
Another noteworthy painter active in circa 1618, though in gTsang at Jo-nang, was the master sPun-skyem-pa, who painted under the patronage of Jo-nang Tāranātha Kun-dga'-snying-po (1575–1634) as mentioned in the latter's autobiography. The murals of the great central temple and the Lha-khang bDe-ba-can chapel were completed at this time, as were half of those in the 'Jam-dpal lha-khang chapel.[447] In ca. 1619, the murals of the Phyag-rdor chapel were completed and the sketches for those of the gNod-sbyin Nor-lha chapel were begun by the master bSod-nams.[448] One can provisionally assume that the main tradition followed by the painters was the sMan-bris. The patron Tāranātha was keenly interested in art, especially Indian Buddhist traditions of painting and sculpture, and he even devoted the final chapter of his celebrated history of Buddhism in India (*rGya gar chos 'byung*) to this subject.[449]



Fig.93. Jo-nang Tāranātha Kun-dga'-snying-po. Xylograph, 17th century Jo-nang edition? After Tāranātha's Life of the Buddha (New Delhi, 1971), p. 2, right.



Pl. 27. Yamāntaka, surrounded by a Ngor-pa lineage of lamas. The last teacher in the lineage is Brang-ti Paṇ-chen Nam-mkha-dpal-bzang (1535-1602), 13th abbot of Ngor. Thangka, 102 x 72 cm. (108 x 78 cm. including red painted frame), ca. 1600. Collection R.R.E. Cf. the portrait of Brang-ti Paṇ-chen Nam-mkha'-dpal-bzang commissioned by his student "dge-sbyong dPal-ldan" in G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 2, p. 106, no. II-229.



Pl. 28. Kun-dga'-snying-po (Jo-nang Tāranātha), surrounded by Mahāsiddhas. Thangka, 17th c.?, 68 x 47 cm. Musée Guimet, no. MG 21 241. Photograph R. M. N. Published: G. Béguin (1991), no. 23, p. 67.



Pl. 29. Four-handed Mahākāla (mGon-po phyag-bzhi-pa) with Jo-nang-pa masters above. Thangka, early 17th c.?, 69 x 47 cm. Collection A. B. Note that this painting is the same size as the preceding one.



Pl. 30. Four-handed Mahākāla (mGon-po phyag-bzhi-pa) with Jo-nang Tāranātha above. Thangka, 17th c.?, 75 x 53 cm. Essen collection. Published: G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 212; = no. I 130, II 383.

At Jo-nang (presumably before 1642, perhaps even under Tāranātha's support before his death in 1634), a series of deities or other religious figures are said to have been printed from wooden blocks.[450] A recent description of such block-prints characterized them as having been (at least in the eyes of a later Khams-pa viewer) in an Old sMan-ris style that had affinities with the sGar-bris.[451]

One surviving group of thangkas depicting the eighty-four mahāsiddhas (five paintings from what was once a seven-thangka set) has a definite doctrinal link with the Jo-nang-pa tradition.[452] The main central figures around which the siddhas were positioned included Tāranātha himself (Kun-dga'-snying-po) and at least one or two of his direct teachers (including the master Lha-dbang-grags-pa).[453] (See Pl. 28.)

Although the ordering of the mahāsiddhas in this set has been said not to follow the order found in one of the written accounts of Tāranātha,[454] in fact it conforms with the tradition of representation that Tāranātha established at Jo-nang and described in a written guide for such paintings, a tradition that was ultimately based on the standard canonical sources.[455] A stylistically very similar painting of the Four-handed Mahākāla from a Jo-nang-pa tradition also exists (Pl. 29), which in addition portrays four lineage masters above, including Jo-nang Kun-dga'-grol-mchog and once again, Lha-dbang-grags-pa (one of Tāranātha's main teachers).[456]

My working hypothesis is that these paintings were commissioned in the early 17th-century by adherents of the Jo-nang-pa tradition, perhaps even in gTsang. Note that none of the lamas portrayed on the available paintings are later than Jo-nang Tāranātha himself. Still, the similarity with the treatment of figures by later (especially Si-tu Paṇ-chen inspired) sGar-bris painters of Khams is sometimes uncanny. But some elements of the landscapes and a few other details seem to derive from other sources. If these paintings do not date to the early 17th century, then another possibility would be that they were later copies or adaptations of earlier works, commissioned in 18th-century Khams by masters trying to revive and preserve Jo-nang-pa traditions (such as Kaḥ-thog rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu).[457]

Another painting of a Jo-nang-pa tradition from roughly the same period (17th–18th century), a Four-handed Mahākāla with a depiction of Tāranātha above (Pl. 30; Essen collection, no. I 130), is strikingly different in its color scheme, which here bears a resemblance to some of the mKhyen-ris murals of yi-dam deities at Gong-dkar (note especially the thicker, more intense colors in the landscape and the liberal utilization of pink). Still, the stylized floral supports beneath a few of the main figures' lotus seats and some elements of the landscape elements (such as the uniformly dark blue sky) are similar to the Jo-nang-pa paintings just discussed.

Certainly we must cautious about automatically attributing all thangkas with sophisticated Chinese landscapes, fine details, and lithe, expressive bodily forms to "Eastern Tibet, 18th century." We do not yet know enough about the development of styles in dBus and gTsang during the 17th century to rule out these regions as the provenance. Indeed, here it seems most reasonable to postulate a gTsang/Jo-nang-pa style of the early 1600s as the likely origin of these works.[458]



Fig. 93A. Jo-nang Tāranātha. Xylograph, ca. 19th century, Amdo. After 'Dzam-thang bla-ma, f. 63a.

Notes

[405] g.Yang-pa chos-rje and dKon-mchog-skyabs, p. 588: *sprel lo de'i dbyar pir thogs dbang po ri mkhar ba dpal ldan blo gros kyis gtsos lha bris pa rnams la rgyal gyi 'du khang gi logs bris la 'grim dgos pa'i bka' bkod....* Two other painters who are named (p. 592) as participating in the project were the lha-bris-pa bZhi-'dzom and the lha-bris-pa 'Phrin-las-dbang-po.

[406] *Ibid.*, p. 590: *lha bris pa rnams la bka' stsal pa/ khyed rnams so so nas rang rkya thub pa'i mkhas pa yin na'ang sprul sku ri mkhar bas skya bris rnams mdzad/ mdang mtshon 'jug rnams kun thun mong du mdzad na ri mo zhe mthun legs pa rang zhig yong bas de lugs dang/.* There follows a long account about how dGe-'dun-rgya-mtsho was persuaded to have his own portrait included among the murals there, after his disciples related the story of the painting of the murals at dGa'-ldan, and how it had been "slightly inauspicious" through the lack of a picture of its founder. During the finishing of dGa'-ldan, Tsong-kha-pa had been staying at 'Ol-kha and had given explicit instructions for all the murals except for in one central location. Instead of painting Tsong-kha-pa's image, the disciples agreed to have the image of the Buddha Śākyamuni depicted in that spot. Tsong-kha-pa later rebuked them, asking: "Don't you have a religious teacher?" It became in fact an established tradition to depict the founding master of a temple and its main patrons in murals on a back wall near the main entrance door.

[407] g.Yang-pa chos-rje and dKon-mchog-skyabs, p. 593: *... 'du khang du phebs/ ri mo rnams la gzigs nas/ sngon bkra shis lhun po'i 'du khang gi ri mo ba rnams kyis rang rkya bzung nas so sor bris 'dug pas/ ri mo legs kyang zhe 'gre po rang med/ da res nged rang gi 'di la ri mo zhe gcig pa dngos gtsang legs pa rang zhig byung gsung/.* As Ye-shes-rtse-mo, p. 261, mentioned in his biography of dGe-'dun-grub-pa, the masters Lha-btsun bsTan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan, bshes-gnyen Sangs-rgyas-bzang-po, and dpon-mo-che bSam-gtan-pa had all painted murals at Tashilhunpo, in addition to those by the great sMan-bla-don-grub.

[408] He commented on a depiction of 'Brom-ston at rGyal, preferring the style of depiction with a face in the shape of a sheep, making a sketch—which was said to be (in its excellence?) just like sMan-thang-pa's painting—to show what he meant. See g.Yang-pa chos-rje and dKon-mchog-skyabs, p. 593: *'brom gyi zhal ras de lug gdong gi rnam pa 'di 'dras dgos gsung/ 'brom gyi zhal ras la dpe zhig phyag bris mdzad pa de sman thang pa'i lha bris 'dra snang zer/.* Later (see p. 594) he is said to have described how rGyal-tshab-rje and mKhas-grub-rje looked, and thus how they should be portrayed.

[409] Viśvakarma is in Indian mythology the artist and architect of the gods.

[410] g.Yang-pa chos-rje and dKon-mchog-skyabs, p. 593: *bī shā karma'i rnam 'phrul pir thogs dbang po ri mkhar bas gtsos rig byed pa rnams thams cad kyis gzabs nas bris/.*

[411] The work appears near the end of the third volume of his collected works. See also Tohoku no. 5583. Cf. also the miscellaneous collection of catalogues, poems, etc., in the same volume (Tohoku no. 5574), which includes descriptions of images at Chos-'khor rGyal.

[412] Dalai bla-ma V, *rJe btsun*, pp. 105f.

[413] A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho, p. 584, no. 13067; and Dagyab (1977), p. 133, no. 313. For a reference to the Lhasa Zhol edition, see Lokesh Chandra (1959), no. 83: *yang bzo rig pa'i bstan bcos mdo rgyud gsal ba'i me long 'phreng kha bas mdzad pa*, fol. 12.

[414] See for instance 'Phreng-kha-ba, *bZo rig pa'i*, and in Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, pp. 38–46.

[415] dPal-ldan-blo-gros-bzang-po, *bDe gshegs mchod rten brgyad kyi cha tshad/ dpal gshin rje gshed kyi gtor ma'i cho ga bar chad kun sel dang chos 'byung gi thig/ dus 'khor gsang 'jig bde mchog/ kun rig gshin rje dmar nag/ lto phye rnams dang/ dkyil 'khor gyi thig gi bsdoms bcas pa'i thig gdab gsal bar ston pa mthong ba'i 'dzum shor dpal gyi be'u/.* MS, dbu-med, long leaves, 7–8 lines per page, library of Barmiok Athing, no. *ga* 8–18. I am indebted to Mr. Tashi Tsering for this reference. At least the first of these works was published from the Zhol par-khang, evidently as an addendum to sMan-bla-don-grub's work. See Lokesh Chandra (1959), no. 82, where the work is listed after sMan-bla-don-grub's main treatise: *'phreng kha ba dpal ldan blo gros bzang po'i gsung mchod rten brgyad kyi thig bcas.* See also in Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, pp. 32–35.

[416] Dalai bla-ma V, *rJe btsun*, pp. 87–91.

[417] *Ibid.*, p. 91: *sprul sku 'phreng kha ba dpal ldan blo gros bzang po zhes pa/ dbyangs can ma'i thang kha zhig [b] ri bar brtsam pa'i tshe mngon rtogs ji lta bu zhig yod dam snyam the tshom pa na/ dbyangs can ma dngos su zhal gzigs nas/ sprul sku ba nga 'di na yod pas gzigs dang zhes gsungs pas/ sprul sku nga la gzigs su grags pa bi shwa karma sa 'dir babs pa lta bu des rnam thar zhing bkod kyi thang kha rgyas par bris so//.* See also Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor* (1991), vol. 2, p. 522 where a printed edition of sprul-sku Nga-la-gzigs's treatise on stūpa proportions is mentioned.

[418] Gu-ru bKra-shis, p. 1003, and A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho, p. 584, no. 13067. Klong-rdol bla-ma, however, lists them as separate persons. See his *Collected Works*, vol. *ma*, p. 415.5. L. S. Dagyab (1977), p. 39, follows this.

[419] Dalai bla-ma V, *rTsis dkar nag*, f. 6b.2, refers to: *dbyangs can mas rjes su bzung ba'i dpal ldan blo gros bzang pos/* ... and later (7a.4) cites: *pir thog dbang po sman bla don grub pas mdzad pa'i cha tshad kyi yi ge chen mo dang/ de'i rjes 'jug dbyangs can lha mos rjes su bzung ba sprul sku ring mkhar ba sogs mkhas pa rnams kyi mdzad pa'i yi ge.* See also Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor* (1991), vol. 3, p. 49, where the 5th Dalai Lama's receipt of a printed edition of the treatises of sprul-sku 'Phrang-kha-ba [*sic*] in late 1676/early 1677 is mentioned: *sprul sku 'phrang kha ba'i [m]chod rten sku gzugs thig rtsa rnams kyi par 'byor/.* As mentioned above, elsewhere the author of this work on stūpa proportions is called "sprul-sku Nga-la-gzigs." See Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor* (1991), vol. 2, p. 522. Later in the same work (vol. 3, p. 27) he again mentions 'Phrang-kha-ba's treatise on stūpa proportions, along with that of Bu-ston, sMan-thang-pa and gNubs Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes: *...cho 'phrul mchod rten gyi thig rtsa kun mkhyen bu/ mkhas pa sman thang pa/ sprul sku 'phrang kha ba sogs kyi yig cha las byung ba kho nas cung zad ma rtogs pa gnubs sangs rgyas rin po che'i man ngag thig rtsa'i gzhung bzhin dgos pa....*

[420] Dalai bla-ma V, *rJe btsun*, p. 106.

[421] *Ibid.*, p. 170. See also Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 167.

[422] Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, pp. 308.4–310.3 (*ta* 16a =158a). Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang is also mentioned by Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 110. According to Shakabpa, who derived his account from information given by the late Khri-byang Rin-po-che, the chief disciples of Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang included a certain Lha-bzo rTa-mgrin-mgon-po. This account must have derived ultimately from Zhu-chen, *dGa' ldan rnam rgyal gling*, p. 318 (*cha* 158b).

[423] His lay brother A-'phen-rgyal was a sort of minor noble.

[424] Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 309.

[425] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 110, recording Khri-byang Rin-po-che's words, states that Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang was a follower of the Old sMan-ris (*sman lugs rnying ma'i ri mo'i rjes 'brang*). This too seems to have been based on Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen, *dGa' ldan rnam rgyal gling*, p. 318 (*cha* 158b): *sman lugs rnying pa'i ri mo'i lugs srol gyi rjes su 'brang ba/ bla ma sangs rgyas lha dbang....*

[426] Dagyab (1977), p. 122, no. 62; and Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, pp. 110f.

[427] Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 42.2 (*na* 21b).

[428] Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 310 (*ta* 159a).

[429] Zhu-chen, *dGa' ldan rnam rgyal gling*, pp. 318–19 (*cha* 158b-159a).

[430] Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, pp. 311–12 (*ta* 159b-160a).

[431] For an instance of his writings on painted religious art, see Padma-dkar-po, *Bris sku'i rnam bshad.* Tucci was told that Padma-dkar-po painted some of the murals at Rwa-lung. See G. Tucci (1956), p. 63, who mentions this in connection with the paintings of a certain protectors' chapel (*mgon khang*) there, but states that these paintings were probably by a later (18th-century?) hand. I am indebted to Mr. E. Lo Bue for this reference.

[432] E. G. Smith (1970), mentions that Padma-dkar-po "is supposed to have followed the classical Menri in his paintings." For his contact with sMan-thang-pa 'Jam-dbyangs-dpal, see Padma-dkar-po, *Sems dpa' chen po ... thugs rje chen po'i zlos gar*, vol. 1, pp. 521.5 (*ga nya* 94a), as cited above. For mentions of contact with a member of mKhyen-brtse's lineage, see Padma-dkar-po, *Li ma brtag pa'i rab byed*, p. 306 (*ka cha* 7b), and the same author's *Sems dpa' chen po*, vol. 1, pp. 511 and 521.5 (*ga nya* 89a and 94a).

[433] Padma-dkar-po, *Sems dpa' chen po*, vol. 1, pp. 465–6 (*ga nya* 66a-b): *phyi lo mgon khang logs bris dus/ li khri dkon tsam byung* [66b] *ba la/ nub gcig rmi lam na/ sog po rgya nag gi rgyal po'i cha byed lta bu/ ras kyi thod bzang can lngas li khri sprad/ mgon khang du song nas ri mor thim pa rmis/ sang nyin tshon li khri'i 'thums chen po zhig/ phyi rol nas rnyed pa byung/.*

[434] *Ibid.*, p. 481: *do dam tshon las yar rgyab pa sprul sku bsod nams rgya mtshos bgyis/.* The overseer for the making of a great Buddha image was Lha-mthong lo-tsā-ba. The same source, p. 498 (*ga nya* 82b), mentions the painting of wood and walls of the assembly hall of Yang-rtse, at which time the Phyag-mdzod-pa did the planning, and the artists' wages, pigments, etc., were all obtained without any problem.

[435] Macdonald and Vergati Stahl (1979), p. 32, who refer to dPag-bsam-dbang-po, *dPal 'brug pa rin po che rgyal dbang thams cad mkhyen pa dpag bsam dbang po thub bstan yongs 'du'i dpal gyi sde'i rnam par thar pa,* xylograph, f. 101a.

[436] Khetsun Sangpo, vol. 8, p. 563: *dgung grangs lnga bcur phebs pa chu spre'u lo/ bka' brgyud bla ma gong ma'i bla brgyud zhal thang 'gran zla med pa bzo bo'i rgyal po bhai shu skar mas bzhengs pa lta bu rje rang nyid kyi sor mo'i rtsal las bskrun/.* See also p. 557 for wondrous events in connection with the casting of a metal image by the Newar artisan Amarasi.

[437] 'Be-lo Tshe-dbang-kun-khyab, *Byams mgon*, p. 713 (15a): *'brug pa mi pham dbang po'i phyag bris sgrol dkar zhal thang/.*

[438] See Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 110.2 (*na* 55b): *sman thang dpal bkras pa lags la gos ta hung la mu tig bkod pa'i thugs rje chen po kha sarpa ṇa'i sku zhig bzhengs su 'jug par mdzad/.* I am indebted to L. van der Kuijp for this reference.

[439] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 322.4 (161b): *dpa' bo gtsug lag pas sman thang bal bris bcol ba'i ... rgyab tu mar pa la karma pa zhwa dmar nag gis bskor ba bcas tshugs shin tu ngo mtshar ba/.*

[440] Dalai bla-ma V, *rJe btsun*, p. 142: *sman thang nas la gnyan mgon 'khor mang gi zhal thang gzabs bris byed rgyu'i*

bslab ston gnang/. The 5th Dalai Lama comments that this thangka later ended up in the personal protector's chapel of his dGa'-ldan pho-brang (at 'Bras-spungs).

441 Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, Paṇ-chen I, p. 47.3 (24a): *pir thog rgyal po sman bla chos kyi rje blo bzang pa dang/ chos kyi rje dkon mchog lhun grub khu dbon dpon slob bcu gsum tsam gyis shing rtsi dang/ seng g.yabs kyi logs bris mdzad/ de'i tshe 'du khang du tshon 'dul ba'i byis pa dang nag mo 'ga' zhig yod pa dang lha mo gnyan pas yin pa 'dra/ kho bo seng g.yabs kyi khri stengs nas phal thog gnyis lhags tsam gyi g.yangs la lhung ba'i steng du sngo bsang khu ba'i khrus gsol bar gyur kyang khru gang tsam gyi g.yang la lhung pa'i na zug kyang med pa zhig byung/*. Much later in the work, p. 412, there is mentioned the similarly named "best of painters" (*bris pa'i mchog gyur*) dge-slong Blo-bzang-legs-pa. On pp. 414f. there is also mentioned the payment of painters.

442 *Ibid.*

443 Grags-pa-don-grub, rGyal-tshab IV, *rGyal ba'i dbang po dbang phyug*, f. 72b. See also Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 233.2 (*na* 117a): *der gser ris kyi gser sogs tshon dang gang ci'i cha rkyen [gtsang nas sde pa tshos] sbyar ba'i sman thang pa dpon slob rnams kyis 'du khang gi shing rtsis dang 'khrungs brgya'i logs bris bgyis shing/ g.ye ba kun shes [dang rig gnas] sogs pas glo bur phan tshun du mgon khang dang rnam sras khang gi 'bur dod rnams rim bzhengs skabs dpon slob gzhir bzhugs dang sde pa mched rnams kyis spyan drangs nas de dag la gzigs rtog dang zhal bkod phyag nas ma mgon gyi sku sogs la phyag bzo'ang ci rigs pa gnang ste g.yung nas bteg/*. The gold and pigments were supplied by the gTsang rulers. The sculptor g.Ye-pa Kun-shes was also at work at this time.

444 Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, p. 76. See also the English introduction to that autobiography by E. Gene Smith, p. 6 and n. 25, where the fascinating account of the image's casting is related. The same story is repeated in Macdonald and Vergati Stahl (1979).

445 Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, p. 55.5 (*ka* 28a). Evidently this same master wrote a question to the Zhwa-dmar dKon-mchog-yan-lag (1525–1583) on a fine point of Vinaya practice, and this reply was listed by A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho (MHTL 11770): *sman thang pa dkon mchog lhun grub kyis zhwa dmar drug pa dkon mchog yan lag la thag rgya ma rung min dris pa'i lan.*

446 Dalai bla-ma V, *rJe btsun*, p. 142: *phyis gser de phyag mdzod sa skyong ba bsod nams rab brtan gyis/ me stag lo lha bzo ba sprul sku dgos skyes kyis byas te sangs rgyas sum cu so lnga'i gser thang bzhengs pa'i sku rgyu la gtong ba mdzad.* This passage is evidently an aside, referring to an event nearly fifty years subsequent to the time of the main narrative (ca. 1577).

447 Tāranātha, *rGyal khams pa*, Collected Works, vol. 1, p. 429 (*rnam* 219a), referring to the *sa rta* year (1618): *spur khyim pa dpon slob 'ga' shas dang/ gtso bor gzhi pa'i lha ris pa rnams kyis gtsug lag khang chen mo'i logs ris rim gyis grub/ lha khang bde ba can gyi logs bris kyang grub cing/ 'jam dpal lha khang* [219b] *gi logs bris kyang cha phyed grub/.* See also G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 200. This same autobiography also contains several references to Newar artisans and the many offerings they received. See for instance ff. 219b-220b and 221b. Some eight decades later, a mKhyen-ris painter with the similar name sPus-khyim Ngag-grol had the prominent position of *dbu 'bring* at the building of the 5th Dalai Lama's reliquary chapel. See sDe-srid, *mChod sdong* (1990 ed.), p. 271. Among the ordinary mKhyen-ris painters was also one Tsher-shing sPus-khyim-pa.

448 Information received from Mr. C. Stearns, who referred to Tāranātha's autobiography (Paro 1978 ed.), pp. 57ff. The same source on pp. 530–531 discusses the availability and sources of a number of pigments such as minium, vermilion, malachite and azurite. Mr. Stearns also referred me to a passage in the biography of Dol-po-pa by the latter's disciple Lha'i-rgyal-mtshan which mentions (f. 16a) the important painters dpon-mo-che Se-bzang and dpon Chos-rgyal among the many artists who worked on the great stūpa at Jo-nang in the period 1330–1333.

449 Tāranātha Kun-dga'-snying-po, *Dam pa'i chos*, pp. 260–262. See also Lama Chimpa and A. Chattopadhyaya, transl. (1980), pp. 347–349.

450 The official conversion of Jo-nang to the dGa'-ldan-pa tradition had to wait until 1658. The monastery's new name was dGa'-ldan-phun-tshogs-gling, which is not to be confused with the identically named printery at 'Bras-spungs from which, under the 5th Dalai Lama's patronage, many standard works were published.

451 Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs, pp. 88f.

452 The provenance of the paintings is not established, but if they came from Khams they may have been connected with the activities of Kaḥ-thog rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu and his pupil Si-tu Paṇ-chen, who aimed at transmitting and preserving certain Jo-nang-pa traditions.

453 These paintings are preserved in the Musée Guimet; see G. Béguin (1991), pp. 60–68, nos. 19–23. No. 22 is Brag-stod-pa Lha-dbang-grags-pa, an important teacher of Tāranātha. 'Dzam-thang bla-ma Ngag-dbang-blo-gros-grags-pa's history of the Jo-nang-pa mentions Brag-stod-pa Chos-sku-lha-dbang-grags-pa on p. 105.3 as a disciple of Kun-dga'-grol-mchog and on p. 112.5 describes the important instructions, including for the Mahāmudrā, that he gave Tāranātha. No. 20, "bTsun-rigs Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan," could be sTag-lung-pa chen-po Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan, the mkhan-po who gave Tāranātha his main monastic ordinations (see p. 105.5), though there is still another teacher of Tāranātha who was named Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan. He was "rDo-ring-pa Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan," a disciple of Kun-dga'-grol-mchog who gave

Tāranātha the *Lam 'bras* instructions (see pp. 105.3 and 112.4). I have not been able to identify no. 21, 'Dren-mchog Tshul-khrims-'gyur-med.

[454] See the references to the early remarks of J. Hackin in Béguin (1991), p. 62.

[455] This tradition is described by Kaḥ-thog rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu in his *Grub thob chen po...*, pp. 395–418. Here the order begins: 1. Lūhipa, 2. Lilapa, 3. Birwapa, 4. Ḍombhiheruka, 5. Śavaripa, 6. Saraha, 7. Kaṃkaripa, 8. Mīnapa, 9. Gorakṣa, 10. Caurāṅgi, 11. Vīnapa, etc., and this is also the standard order of the well-known series of biographies attributed to Mi-'jigs-pa sByin-pa-dpal. (The order of the figures in Béguin [1991], p. 62, should be: 1, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 3, 4 , 5, 6, 7, i.e., first down the right-hand side relative to the viewer and then down the left.) According to Tshe-dbang-nor-bu, his way of describing these figures agrees with the tradition of practical instructions originating with slob-dpon dPa'-bo-'od-gsal or dPa'-bo-rdo-rje as translated by Mi-nyag lo-tsā-ba, and he states that he has faithfully based his descriptions on the actual murals of the Theg-mchog-he-ru-ka'i lha-khang of Jo-nang, on his examination of two thangka paintings (*ras bris*), and also on the incomplete written description of the mahāsiddhas by Tāranātha that he found discarded in a pile of sweepings at Jo-nang (see pp. 414–417). The canonical works upon which this tradition based itself were Peking (Tanjur) no. 5092, dPa'-bo-'od-gsal (*Vīraprabhāsvara), *Grub thob brgyad cu rtsa bzhi'i rtogs brjod do ha 'grel pa dang bcas pa*, translated by the paṇḍita Abhayaśrī and the translator Mi-nyag lo-tsā-ba, 46 folios; Peking no. 5091, Mi-'jigs-pa sByin-pa-dpal (*Abhayadattaśrī), *Grub thob brgyad cu rtsa bzhi'i lo rgyus*, translated by sMon-grub-shes-rab, 68 folios; and the briefest work, Peking no. 3140, dPa'-bo-'od-gsal (*Vīraprabhāsvara), *Grub thob brgyad cu rtsa bzhi'i rtogs pa'i snying po*, 6 folios. G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 227, lists and extracts the major canonical sources on the eighty-four mahāsiddhas. More recently, Alice Egyed (1984) has presented three texts (including two canonical ones): dPa'-bo-'od-gsal's *rTogs pa snying po* and bla-ma rDo-rje-gdan-pa's *gSol 'debs*. On pp. 115–129 she gives a concordance and index.

[456] This is a thangka, 69 × 47 cm in size, from the Collection A.B. It was published in an auction catalogue of Galerie Koller Zürich, 27/28th May, 1988, no. 4, and was described there as "Tibet, ca. 18th c." The figures above are a yi-dam deity (Cakrasamvara?) in yab-yum at the top middle, and four lineage lamas: sNyug-la Paṇ-chen (Ngag-gi-dbang-phyug-grags-pa-dpal-bzang-po, 1458–1515), rJe Grol-mchog (Kun-dga'-grol-mchog), sPre-bo Chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, and rnal-'byor-dbang-phyug Lha-dbang-grags-pa. If the lineage indeed ends with Lha-dbang-grags-pa, then the thangka is a Jo-nang-pa painting of the early 1600s.

[457] There also existed some Jo-nang-pa monasteries in eastern Tibet. We should not forget that Bacot evidently found his set in Khams.

[458] See also the remarks G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 197–8, who was astonished by some of the murals commissioned by Tāranātha in the mGon-khang 'Phar and mKha'-spyod lha-khang temples at Phun-tshogs-gling, and described the first as having "no relation with other Tibetan schools that we know of." He speaks of the figures becoming light and moving with agility.



Fig. 93B. The Jo-nang Stūpa. Xylograph, ca. 19th century, Amdo. After 'Dzam-thang bla-ma.

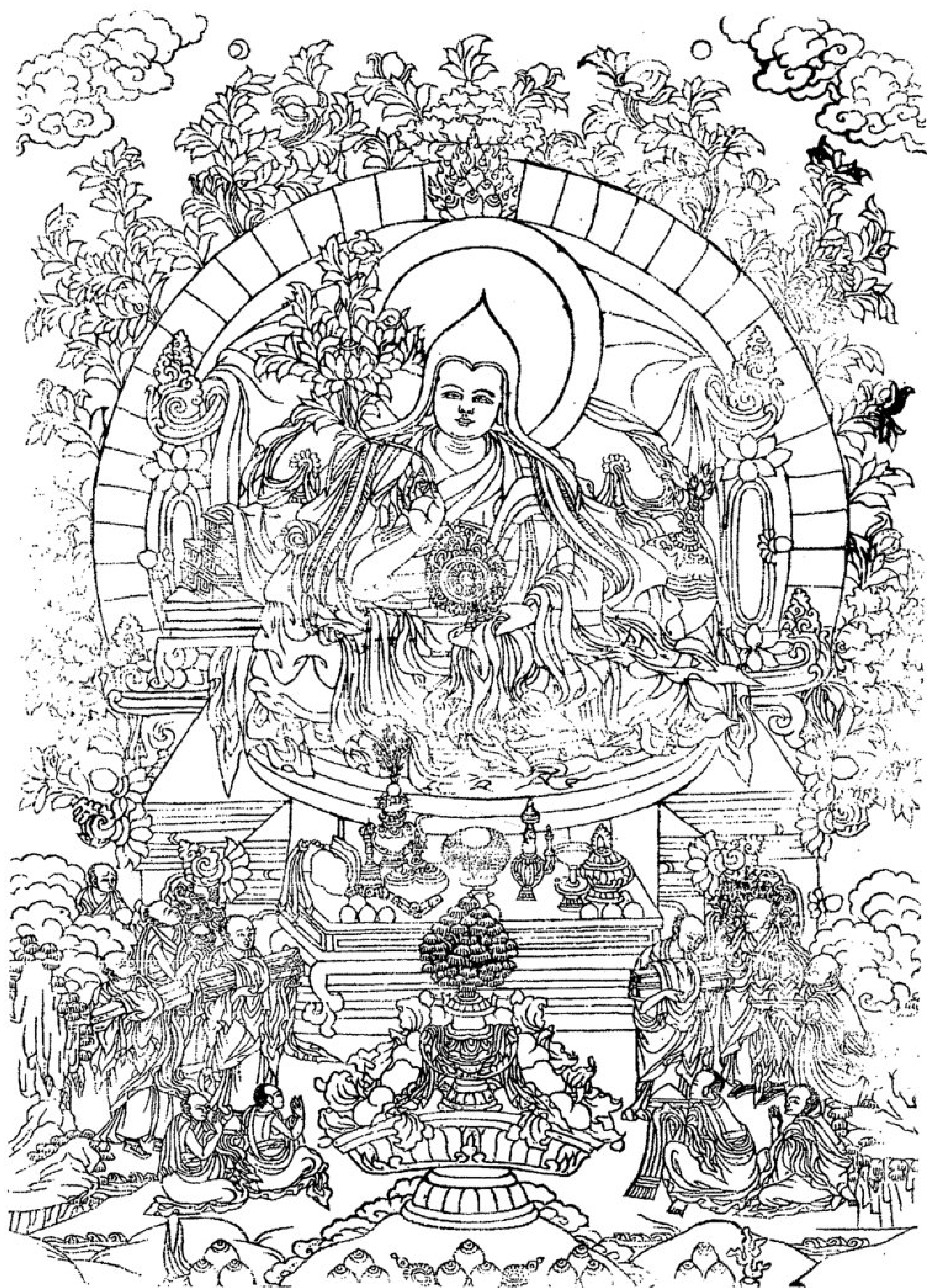


Fig. 94. The 5th Dalai Lama. Xylograph, Amdo. Published Bod kyi nang bstan lha ris kyi sgyu rtsal, p. 44.

Chapter 7

sMan-ris Artists Patronized by the 5th Dalai Lama and the sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho

In the mid 17th century, many sMan-ris artists were called to work in the Lhasa area on projects sponsored by one of the greatest patrons and connoisseurs of religious art and culture ever to appear in Tibet, the Great 5th Dalai Lama.[459] It was he who consolidated the victory of the dGe-lugs-pa-Mongol alliance over the gTsang king in 1642 and who in the same year founded the dGa'-ldan pho-brang government, with sDe-srid bSod-nams-rab-brtan (d. 1657) appointed as the first Tibetan sDe-srid. (The Mongol bsTan-'dzin-chos-rgyal, d. 1654, who led the overthrow of the main fortress of the gTsang king at Shigatse, earned himself the title of "king" [*rgyal po*] of Tibet.)

Before, during and after his periods of official political reign—which lasted from 1658 until the appointment of Phrin-las-rgya-mtsho as sDe-srid in 1662 and again for a year in 1668–69 after the latter's death—the 5th Dalai Lama patronized countless building, renovation and thangka painting projects. Between 1645 and 1648 he undertook and carried to completion the building of the White Palace (Pho-brang-dkar-po) of the Potala. In the period 1649 to 1653 he also sponsored the foundation of many dGe-lugs-pa establishments in various parts of Tibet.

For the painting of the White Palace of the Potala, the seat of his new government, many of the most famous and expert artists from dBus and gTsang were summoned, including the extraordinary gTsang-pa Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho, court artist of the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che at Tashilhunpo.[460] From 1645 until the 4th lunar month of 1648, the murals of the Tshoms-chen-shar, bKa'-'gyur lha-khang and Grwa-khang gSang-sngags-dga'-tshal (assembly hall of the rNam-rgyal grwa-tshang) in the Potala Palace were painted.[461] The murals in the Tshoms-chen-shar ("Eastern Great Hall") and the bKa'-'gyur lha-khang ("Kanjur Chapel") were executed following the plans of the 5th Dalai Lama.[462] Some of the murals painted at this time included depictions of the previous lives of the 1st Dalai Lama, dGe'-'dun-grub-pa.[463] These and similar murals painted with the 5th Dalai Lama's support in the period 1644–1651 may have served as models for later depictions.[464]

A certain La-mo Kun-dga' from Yul-lnga in 'Phaṇ-po is also said to have worked on the White Palace murals, and for his contribution he is said to have been rewarded with the rank of *dbu-che*. (This at least is reported by recent generations of his family; I have not yet found him referred to in the contemporary sources). His descendants are said to have included a son, La-mo Tshangs-pa-dgra-'dul, and much later, the 20th-century Lhasa state artist (holding the rank of *dbu chen*[465]) Las-mtshan-pa bSod-nams-rin-chen and his son, the *dbu chung* Rig-'dzin-dpal-'byor (1933–1991), who was the ultimate source for this particular information.[466] Each generation of their family, the Yul-lnga Kha-ri-khang-gsar of 'Phan-po, was obliged to furnish one son to study and work in the "bZo-sbyong-ngo-mtshar-thang-bris" or "bZo-sbyong slob-gra" guild or school in Lhasa.[467] According to the English title page of the



Fig. 95. The 5th Dalai Lama. Drawing by the contemporary Tibetan artist Mig-dmar in Dharamsala, India. Courtesy of Dr. C. Cüppers.

first edition of Rig-'dzin-dpal-'byor's book, at least, his tradition represents "the sMan-rnying [i.e. Old sMan-ris] school of Central Tibet."

sMan-ris painters contributed prominently to most of the great building or renovation projects. Among the sixty-eight sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris artists who helped paint or repaint various temples during the extensive building and renovating at 'Bras-spungs in 1654, for instance, the 5th Dalai Lama mentioned the following three as the main masters of the sMan-ris: sTag-lung dPal-mgon, Lha-sa sKal-ldan, and 'Brong-rtse Blo-bzang.[468] The same autobiography records that in 1662 the painters sku-mdun sMan-thang-pa and sprul-sku dPal-mgon headed a team of some sixty-one artists at work under the 5th Dalai Lama's patronage.[469] In the same year the Dalai Lama induced several monks to study the arts of sacred painting and sculpture under the painter Lags A-gur (=gZhi-ga Shar-pa A-gur Gu-ru-rta-mgrin)[470] and the sculptor sprul-sku Hor-dar-can,[471] respectively, mentioning the importance of such ancillaries to tantric ritual practice. Already in 1657 the 5th Dalai Lama had sponsored the training of a number of art students, but they proved to be too few for later needs.[472]

In 1664 a group of eighty-six ordinary artists and ten apprentices were at work under the 5th



Fig. 96. The 5th Dalai Lama. Drawing by the Sherpa artist Oleshey (dge-chung Ngag-dbang-legs-bshad alias Sho-rong A'u Legs-bshad) in Kailash, vol. 3-4 (1975), p. 378.

Dalai Lama's patronage at the Lha-sa bar-skor to complete some extensive renovation work begun the previous year by the sDe-pa in honor of the Lha-sa Jo-bo. In addition, there were fourteen master painters with the rank of middling and lesser painter-overseers or foremen (*dbu 'bring* and *dbu chung*) directing the work of the ordinary painters. Heading the project were the two chief directors of painting (*dbu chen*) sMan-thang-nas and sTag-lung dPal-mgon, the latter master having been particularly talented and effective in designing the layouts of the major murals.[473]

Then in circa 1668, sixteen painters led by sTag-lung dPal-mgon painted thirty-five thangkas under the 5th Dalai Lama's sponsorship, each thangka portraying one of the thirty-five Buddhas of confession with four attendant deities (*lha mgron*). The work was done with gold pigment on a red silk support. Each set of two thangkas also depicted the eight medicine Buddhas (*sman bla bde gshegs brgyad*).[474] In the 6th lunar month of 1669, sTag-lung dPal-mgon and a group of artists painted a thangka using faint washes of colors (*ha tshon ma*) to depict the *Lam rim* lineage teachers down to the master 'Jam-dbyangs dKon-mchog-chos-'phel.[475]

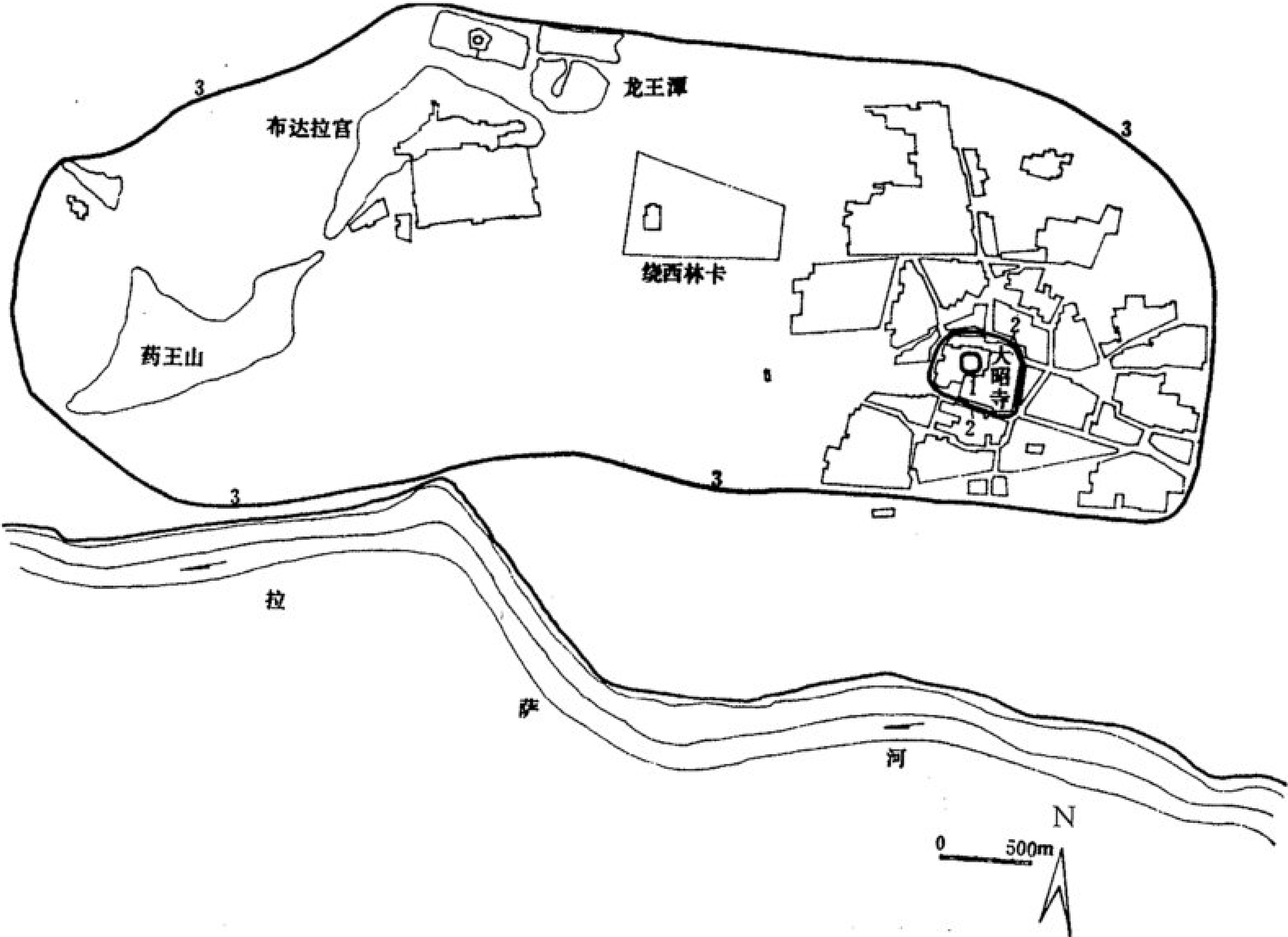


Fig. 97. Map of greater Lhasa. This shows the three main circumambulation routes around the central shrine of the city: inner, intermediate and outer. Nga-phod Ngag-dbang-'jigs-med, gTsug lag khang [in Chinese] (Beijing, 1985), p. 113.

Fig. 98. Map of central Lhasa. Nga-phod Ngag-dbang-'jigs-med, gTsug lag khang [in Chinese] (Beijing, 1985), p. 112. The Jo-khang is shown in black.

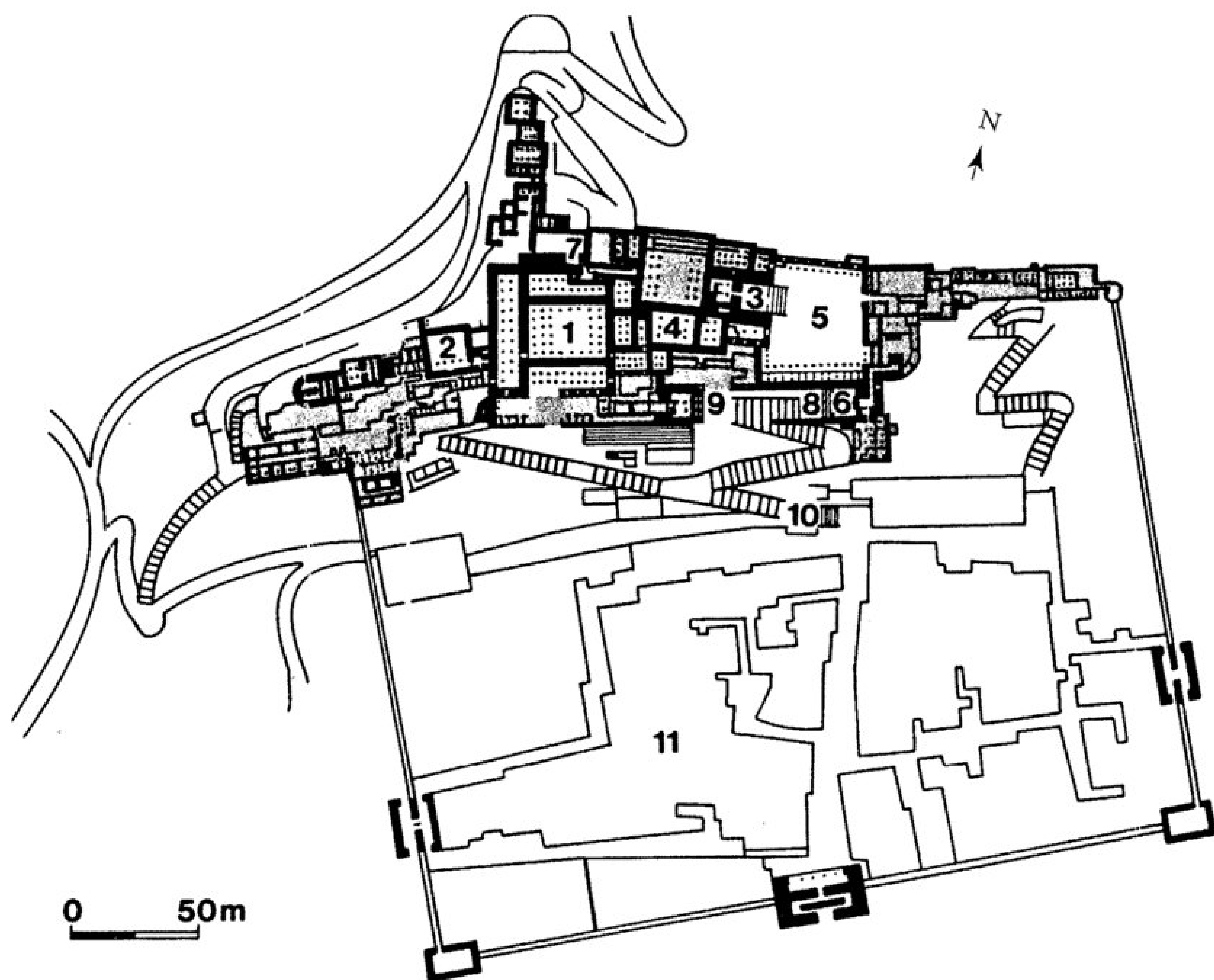


Fig. 99. Floor plan of the Potala Palace. After K.-H. Everding (1993), p. 162. (See also V. Chan [1984], p. 101, and on the Red Palace, N. Okuyama [1992]).

1. The Great Western Assembly Hall (Tshoms-chen-nub) in the Red Palace.
2. Chapel housing the reliquary stūpa of the 13th Dalai Lama, west of the Red Palace.
3. Entrance foyer to the White Palace.
4. Structure immediately to the south of the Great Eastern Assembly Hall (Tshoms-chen-shar) of the White Palace.
5. bDe-dbyangs-shar courtyard to the east of the White Palace.
6. Viewing platform near the eastern entrance.
7. Rear (northern) entrance
8. Eastern entrance, at the top of the Phun-tshogs-'du-lam ramp.
9. Western entrance, at the top of the Byang-chen-thar-lam ramp.
10. Bottom of the stairs.
11. Zhol village.

Renovation of the Jo-khang and Ra-mo-che

In about 1671 over the course of more than seven months, the Dalai Lama sponsored a major renovation of the ancient Jo-khang temple in Lhasa. He summoned a group of fourteen artists led by E-pa sprul-sku Bag-dro (who was chiefly famous as a sculptor). The work included the painting of murals in the Jo-khang and also in the Ra-mo-che. A detailed list of the materials expended on this project is given, leaving no doubt about the make-up of the traditional palette and giving surprisingly exact information about how much of each pigment was used relative to the others:

112 *zho* measures[476] of gold powder (*grang gser*)
1446 leaves of Tibetan gold leaf (*gser shog bod brdungs*)
6180 leaves of Chinese (or Indian?) gold leaf (*rgya brdungs*)

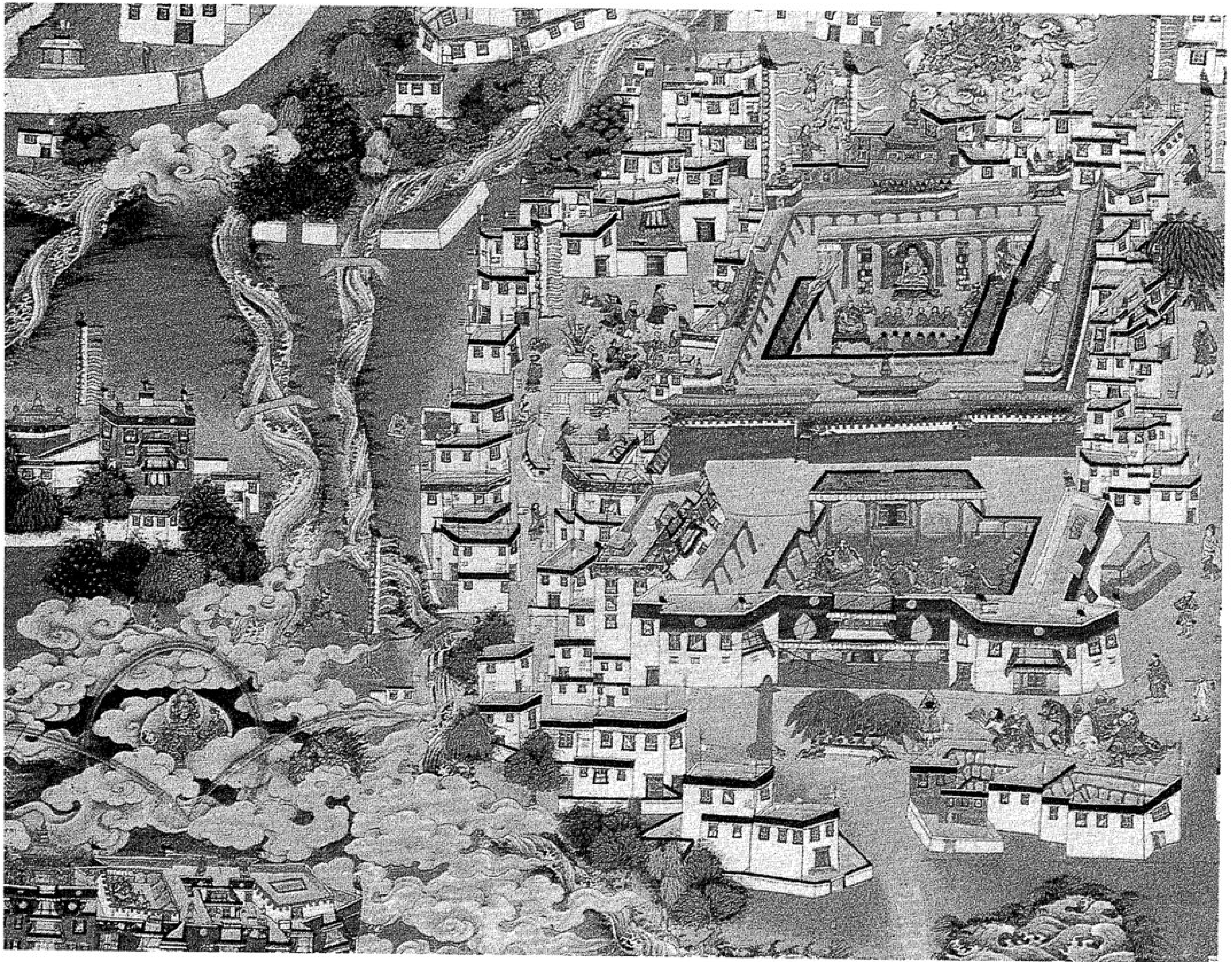


Fig. 100. The Jo-khang. Detail of thangka, after Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 22. The Potala Palace is depicted at the bottom left.

4 *bre* measures[477] of vermilion (*mtshal*)
2 1/2 *bre* measures of minium (*li khri*)
2 1/2 *bre* of light-green malachite (*spang skya*)
5 *bre* of deep-green malachite (*spang ma*)
6 *bre* of deep-blue azurite (*mthing*)
3 1/2 *bre* of light-blue malachite (*sngo skya*)
7 *bre* of indigo (*rams*)
1 *bre* of orpiment yellow (*ba bla*)
900 squares of cotton cloth
6 *khal* measures[478] of glue (*spyin*)

Quantities of wheat flour, iron wire, and copper wire were also used. Supervising the whole project were dPal-'byor-bkra-shis and bsTan-'dzin-rab-brtan.[479]

Then in 1673 the large painting project of executing murals in the Lhasa Ra-mo-che temple was undertaken. Over fifty painters participated in this work, including the two chief directors of painting (*bris pa'i dbu chen*), Gong-dkar chos-sde gSang-sngags-mkhar chos-mdzad gzhon-nu and 'Bras-spungs slob-dpon Ngag-dbang-phrin-las, the three middle-level painter-overseers (*dbu 'bring*) Gra-nang sBus-khyim-pa Ngag-dbang-sri-chod, Zhos-ra rGyal-po and gSang-mkhar Tshe-'phel, and the junior painter-overseer (*dbu chung*) sBus-khyim-pa Nor-dbang. Forty-seven other artists completed the work party, including Gras bDe-chen-chos-'khor-ba Jambhala and Dol Byams-pa-rgyal-mtshan. The two main supervi-

sors of the whole project were the 'Dar-pa rje-drung and Kong-po Mur-bzang-pa bSod-nams-dar-rgyas. The head sculptor was 'jim-bzo-ba dbu-chen Bag-dro from E.[480] Soon thereafter one finds a detailed account of the materials used for a great cloth image. Here the chief director of pictorial art (*ri mo'i dbu mdzad*) was Rin-spungs Tshe-dbang-rig-'dzin and his junior painter-overseer (*dbu chung*) was Ra-kha 'Jam-dbyangs-dbang-po.[481]

Writings and Studies of the 5th Dalai Lama

Some of these later followers of the sMan-thang-pa tradition revered their founder sMan-bla-don-grub as an almost divine presence (he was considered to have been an emanation of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī) and they even directed prayers of supplication to him. For instance, the artist Rags-kha-ba 'Jam-dbyangs-dbang-po in about 1677 requested the Dalai Lama to write a brief prayer supplicating the blessings of sMan-thang-pa and a few of his later followers. The Great Fifth then obliged him.[482] This short work may well survive in the large collections of prayers preserved in the 5th Dalai Lama's collected works.[483]

The 5th Dalai Lama also studied iconometry and it is recorded that the lineage he received traced back to the great sMan-bla-don-grub himself. According to the Great Fifth's record of teachings received (*gsan yig*), sMan-bla-don-grub passed down to his disciples the system of iconometry that had been formulated by the earlier master Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (1290–1364) on the basis of the canonical sources, a system that was said to have been later clarified by rTa-nag Ri-mkhar-ba (='Phreng-kha-ba).[484] The actual lineage for the 5th Dalai Lama's studies of iconometry is given as:

(1) sMan-bla-don-grub (fl. mid to late 1400s)
(2) sku-mdun 'Jam-dpal-dbyangs (fl. late 1400s-early 1500s)
(3) sdom-brtson Blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho (fl. early or mid 1500s) [=sMan-bla chos-kyi-rje Blo-bzang-pa?]
(4) mkhas-mchog Yon-tan-rgya-mtsho (fl. mid 1500s)
(5) dpyod-ldan Chu-bzang sprul-sku (fl. late 1500s)
(6) gZhon-nu-don-grub (fl. early 1600s)
(7) Chos-dbyings-rang-grol (1604–1669)
(8) The 5th Dalai Lama (1617–1682)

It is strange that 'Phreng-kha-ba himself does not appear in the lineage. But interestingly enough, the 5th Dalai Lama then goes on to record the lineages by which he learned to classify and evaluate sacred images and other objects, especially based on the treatises of Grum-stod Lha-sa paṇ-chen and Bya bKra-shis-dar-rgyas.[485] This was a lineage of savants and connoisseurs, not of great artists. The first lineage he records was:[486]

(1) sDe-pa Lha-sa rdzong-pa Paṇ-chen
(2) mTsho-sgo-ba Grags-pa-rdo-rje
(3) Paṇḍi-ta chen-po sMon-gro-ba Tshe-dbang-don-grub
(4) sprul-sku mDo-sngags-gling-pa
(5) dpyod-ldan gzug-po-ba gZhon-nu-skal-bzang
(6) the 5th Dalai Lama (1617–1682)

An alternative lineage, especially for the evaluation and identification of Indian and Chinese images and other religious objects, was as follows:

(3) Paṇḍi-ta chen-po sMon-gro-ba Tshe-dbang-don-grub
(4) Paṇ-chen 'Jam-dbyangs-dbang-rgyal-rdo-rje
(5) the 5th Dalai Lama

The 5th Dalai Lama in his autobiography also gives numerous references to thangkas he commissioned, though for commonplace compositions such as thangkas depicting one hundred of the same deity (*brgya thang*), often no artists are named.[487] Some of the more interesting thangkas from among the hundreds of paintings he or his successor commissioned were those belonging to series of thangkas depicting his own visions and yogic experiences.[488] Two sets of such paintings had as their main figures the previous embodiments (*sku 'phreng*) of the Dalai Lamas. At least four of these thangkas have already been published.[489]



Pl. 31. The Fifth Dalai Lama. The golden handprints and footprints may well be those of the great pontiff, assuming that the painting was the last of the series and was commissioned in his lifetime with prayers for his longevity. (Note the four crossed vajras, one beneath each print, symbols of immutability and hence, long life.) Such footprints and handprints identified the painting still more closely with the lama depicted and made it more effective as a "field for generating merit" (bsod nams kyi zhing). Thangka, central Tibet, late-17th c.?, 77x50 cm. Musée Guimet, MG 19107. Photograph R. M. N. Published G. Béguin (1991), p. 90; A. Chayet (1994), p.186, pl. 24.

Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol

The recent Tibetan historian Shakabpa when listing a few noteworthy sMan-ris artists who had been patronized by the 5th Dalai Lama (1617–1682) mentioned not only sNa-rtse sTag-lung dPal-mgon (who was mentioned several times above) and Lho-brag-pa bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu (who will be discussed below), but also the important lama Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol (1604–1669).[490] The latter was an influential religious teacher of the 5th Dalai Lama, teaching him mainly rNying-ma traditions. (The same Dalai Lama remained a devotee of these traditions all his life and had cordial relations with other important rNying-ma masters.[491]) Zur-chen lent the young Dalai Lama and the Paṇ-chen-Rin-po-che-led dGe-lugs-pa/Mongol alliance important moral and spiritual support during the struggle with the gTsang king in 1641–42.[492] The Dalai Lama in 1676 composed a detailed history of his life, which contains many important references to Tibetan Buddhist art and which is the main source for the following notes.[493] It is of interest to note that Zur-chen himself had similarly written a biography of the 5th Dalai Lama.

Zur-chen was the teacher who taught that Dalai Lama the system of iconometric proportions according to the traditions of sMan-bla-don-grub and Ri-mkhar-ba, as mentioned above.[494] Zur-chen was also highly talented in producing works of religious art. He had shown natural drawing ability even at age four or five, and had formally learned proportions from his father, Zur 'Khor-lo-dbang-phyug, at the age of eight or nine.[495] In ca. 1633–34 at dGa'-ldan-khang-gsar in the room where he took his meals in the dKar-phibs-chen-mo, in the presence of many onlookers he calmly copied onto paper details from an exceptional thangka portraying the Buddha's Performance of Miracles that had been painted by the earlier painting master sMan-thang-nas Blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho.[496] In about 1639 he painted extensively at rDo-rje-brag, partly basing himself on an older thangka.[497] In ca. 1644 he painted, as if magically, murals in the Chos-khri assembly hall depicting the eight medicine Buddhas, painting them in both sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris styles. He thus may have influenced his younger student the 5th Dalai Lama to appreciate and patronize both of these major traditions. In the same period he used an old Chinese painting (*si thang*) from rGyal as the model for a painting of the Sixteen Elders. For carrying this project to completion, he was assisted by a group of ordinary artists.[498]



Fig. 101. Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 579 (or 569?).

His biography also mentions his paintings of Rig-'dzin rDo-rje-drag-po-rtsal and Khyab-'jug. They were strikingly realistic, as if the deities themselves were actually present.[499] In 1643 he evidently also visited the workshop of the earlier master sculptor sprul-sku Sle'u-chung-pa (fl. 15th c.) at the monastery of Sle'u-chung, a dGe-lugs-pa establishment.[500] Even that proud genius among painters, his contemporary lha-bris-pa Chos-dbyings (i.e. Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho of gTsang), is said to have remarked about him: "If Zur would not act as a lama but would only paint and do nothing else like we do, he would certainly become incomparable in art, like the great sMan-thang-pa 'Jam-dbyangs-pa!"[501]

Painters Patronized by sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho

The 5th Dalai Lama's true successor (who was also rumored in some quarters to have been his natural son), sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho (1653–1705), was also an outstanding patron of culture and religious art.[502] During his reign as sDe-srid, which began with his appointment in 1679 when the Dalai Lama was still alive and ended in 1702, three years before his own violent death in 1705, Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho is recorded to have patronized many sMan-ris artists. For instance, when commissioning paintings at Gra-tshar of the Dalai Lamas' successive rebirths known as the "*rGyal ba'i 'khrungs rabs rmad byung skal pa ma*,"[503] he patronized the master artist (*dbu chen*) sMan-thang-pa mGon-po-tshe-dbang, together with Pho-brang Phun-tshogs,[504] the abovementioned Lha-sa Rags-kha-ba 'Jam-dbyangs-dbang-po and others, in other words, a group of important artists of the sMan-ris tradition (*sman lugs*).[505] The 5th Dalai Lama himself had written a treatise describing how paintings depicting the series of his previous lives (*'khrungs rabs*) should be executed. This work was entitled *'Khrungs rabs kyi zhing bkod 'bri tshul gyi rtogs brjod kha byang dang bcas pa gsal ba'i me long* and it is found in vol. 15 (*ba*) of his collected writings.[506]



Fig. 102. sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 577.



Fig. 103. sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho. Detail from a late-17th or 18th-century thangka. After Bod kyi thang ka, plate 78. Detail from Pl. 33.

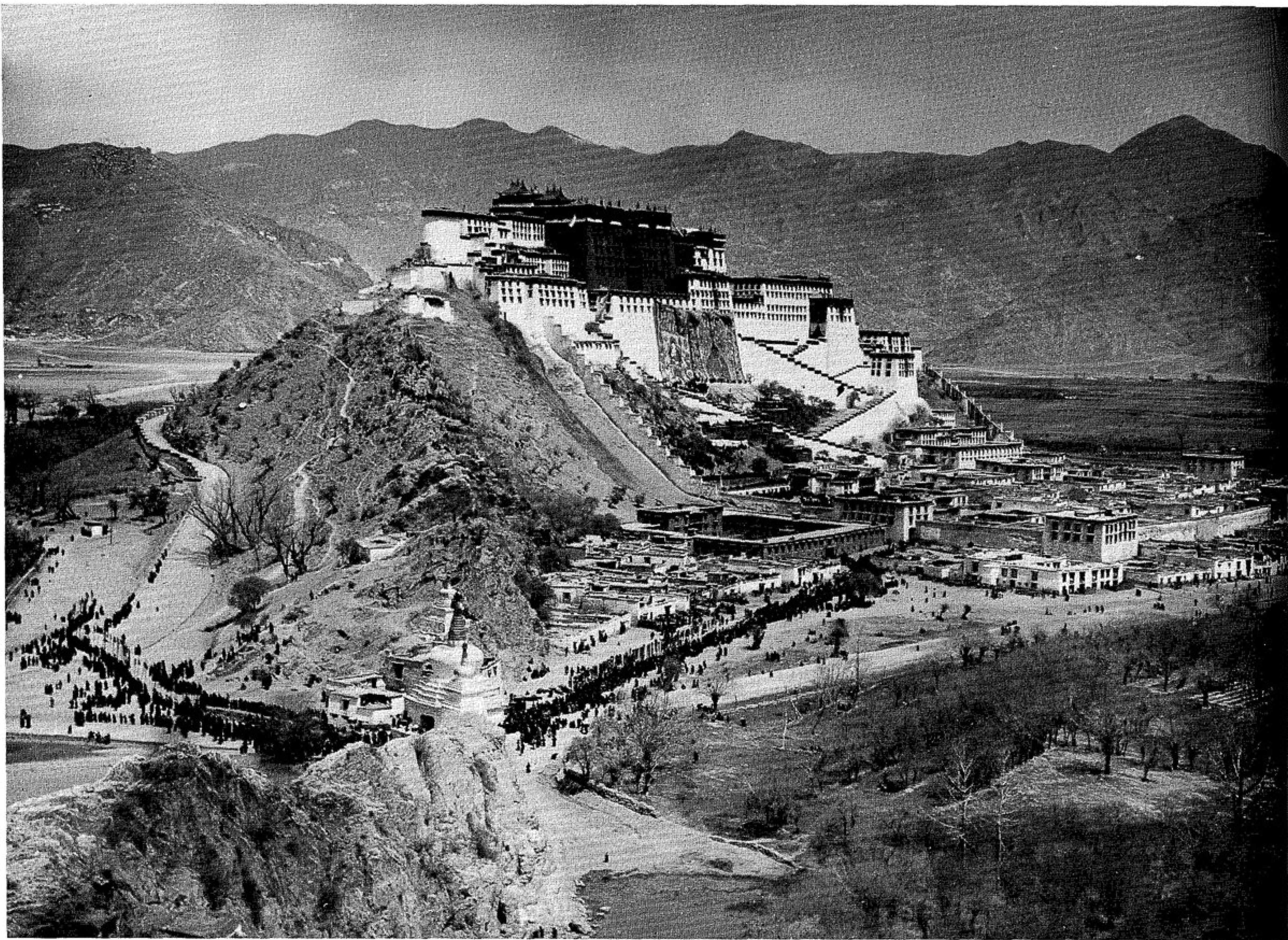


Fig. 104. The Potala Palace. Photograph attributed to Ovshe Norzunov, a Kalmuk Mongol who visited Lhasa in ca. 1900; obtained by C. Suydam Cutting in Lhasa, 1935. The Newark Museum Tibetan Archives. Photograph previously attributed to A. David-Neel (March, 1924) in V. Reynolds and A. Heller (1983), Catalogue of the Newark Museum Tibetan Collection, vol. 1, p. 36.

Other important court artists of the sDe-srid included such masters as Lho-brag bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu and bsTan-'dzin-dar-rgyas, who were summoned (in 1690–94?) to work on the "renovation" of the Potala Palace, i.e. on the painting of the Red Palace. At this time one important theme for mural paintings and thangkas was the lineage of births of the Dalai Lamas. In the great Tshoms-chen Srid-zhi-phun-tshogs hall, the murals included depictions of the Dalai Lamas' previous births, and a complete biography of the great 5th Dalai Lama. (There is said to exist a separate modern guide to these murals.) In the skylight murals there was to be found a complete set of the 5th Dalai Lama's former lives (*'khrungs rabs*).[507]

To the left of the gSer-gdung Zhal-ras-lha-khang above the Tshoms-chen (Srid-zhi-phun-tshogs) hall were also pictured many figures including the previous lives of the Dalai Lamas. To the right were painted as the background of the murals episodes from the life of Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho (who also featured as one of the main figures).[508]

Fig. 105. Outside murals in a courtyard of the western assembly hall of the Potala Palace, first floor (mid- or late 17th c.?). After The Potala Palace of Tibet (Shanghai, People's Art Publishing House), p. 53, pl. 43.

Fig. 106. The Potala Palace. Detail from thangka, after Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 22. The Potala Palace is depicted at the top left.

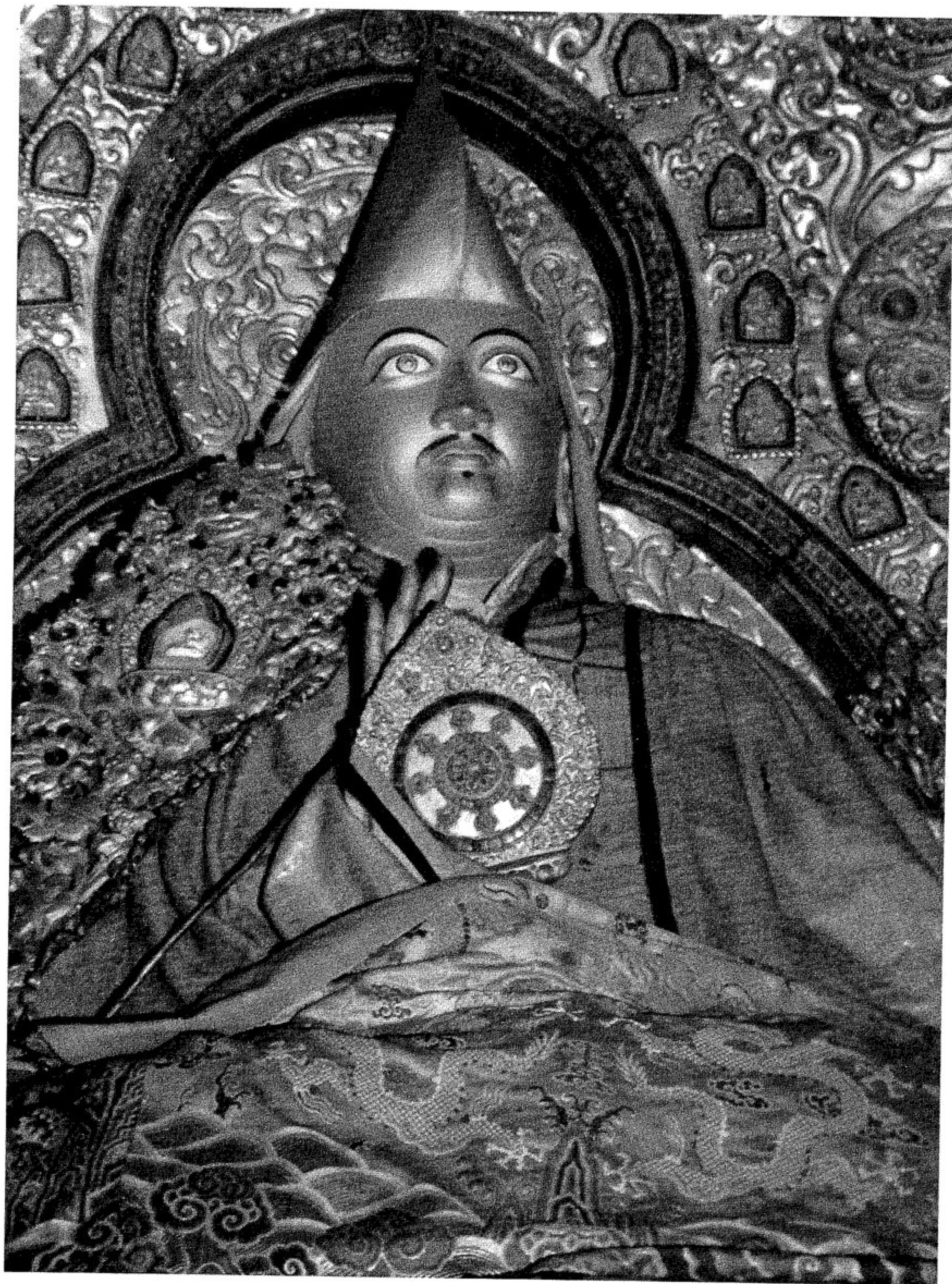
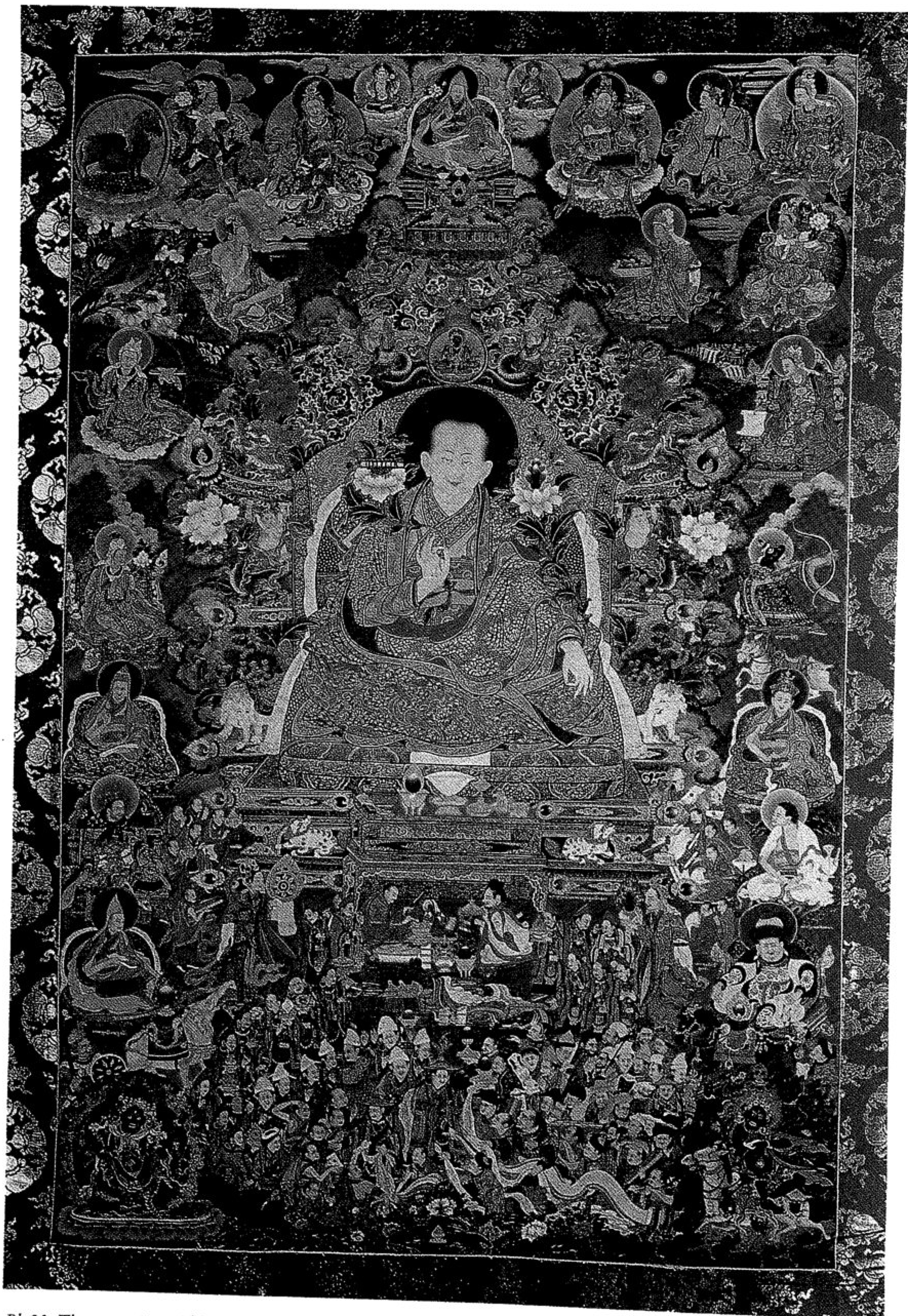


Fig. 107. Statue of the 5th Dalai Lama, Potala Palace. After Pho brang po ta la, pl. 77. Also in The Potala Palace of Tibet (Shanghai, People's Art Publishing House, 1982), p. 77.



Pl. 32. The 5th Dalai Lama. Events from his secret visionary experiences are depicted in the background. The painting belongs to a set probably commissioned during the regency of Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho (1679-1702). Thangka, Central Tibet, late 17th/early 18th c.?, 94 x 64 cm. Now preserved in the Potala Palace, Lhasa. After Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 77.



Pl. 33. The regent sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho. Numerous nobles and other important historical personages are pictured as small figures to the right and left. The 5th Dalai Lama appears both above in the upper middle position and below as the lowest lama in the left-hand column. Thangka, Central Tibet, ca. late 17th/early 18th c., 97 x 63 cm. Now preserved in the Potala Palace, Lhasa. After Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 78.



Fig. 108. Potala Palace and Zhol pillar. After Snellgrove and Richardson (1969), p. 37. Photograph H. E. Richardson.

Among the fifteen major sets of thangkas—mainly from this period—preserved in the Potala and described in a recent Potala guide book, one also finds the following, which were commissioned by sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho in memory of the 5th Dalai Lama: (p. 86, set D) a depiction of the 5th Dalai Lama's series of former lives (*'khrungs rabs*) in vermilion over a base of gold pigment; (p. 88, set G) a set of twenty-three full-color thangkas showing a secret biography of the 5th Dalai Lama known as the sealed *Ye shes sgyu ma'i rol rtsed*; and (p. 88, set H) a set of twenty-three full-color thangkas showing the secret biography of the 5th Dalai Lama known as the sealed secret biography of the earth-dragon year (1688) (*sa 'brug lo'i gsang rnam rgya can*).[509] As mentioned above, four thangkas from one of these series have been published.[510] (See Pl. 32.)

A number of references exist in particular to the painter Lho-brag bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu, who flourished in this period. He was one of the leading artists participating in the great project of painting thangkas to illustrate the sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho's medical work the *Vai ḍū rya sngon po*, a project which evidently spanned much of the 1680s and 1690s.[511] The sDe-srid in his catalogue



Fig. 109. Entrance to the temple of the 5th Dalai Lama's reliquary stūpa in the Potala Palace. After The Potala Palace of Tibet (Shanghai, People's Art Publishing House), p. 93, pl. 77.

to the huge funeral reliquary and chapel of the 5th Dalai Lama mentions him as one of the foremost painting masters of the sMan-ris style.[512] In this enumeration which dates to the 1690s, he stands at the head of all the more than a hundred and sixty painters who worked in the sMan-tradition. The director of painting and his sub-directors or foremen were: the sMan-lugs dbu-chen Lho-brag bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu, and the three dbu-chung Rong-pa bSod-nams-rgyal-po, sNye-mo Karma and Lhas-byin-bdud-btsan.[513] Given the existence of detailed written sources as well as of a fairly high number of surviving paintings from this period, it should be relatively easy to document further the main Central-Tibetan (dBus) and especially Lhasa court artists of the mid and late 1600s.

Notes

[459] G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 208. He cites sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho's edition and completion of the 5th Dalai Lama's autobiography, vol. 1, pp. 324 and 351 [=352]. For a study of a portrait sculpture of the Great 5th Dalai Lama, see Ariane Macdonald (1977).

[460] Bod rang skyong ljongs rig dngos do dam u yon lhan khang, ed. (1992), p. 30. His activities will be described in more detail below in a separate chapter. On the Potala Palace see also F. Meyer (1987) and N. Okuyama (1992).

[461] Bod rang skyong ljongs rig dngos do dam u yon lhan khang, ed. (1992), pp. 15f.

[462] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

[463] An early Western study of this theme is A. von Stäel-Holstein (1932), who described already sixty years ago two rebirth-lineage thangkas, one showing the 8th Dalai Lama as the main figure (with 25 previous existences), and the other showing the Paṇ-chen Blo-bzang-dpal-ldan-ye-shes (surrounded by 14 other figures). He attempted to establish the lineage and identify each individual figure (most of which bore inscriptions). Later K. Lange (1969), p. 215, usefully described a thangka that depicts twenty-two of the previous rebirths of the 5th Dalai Lama. The painting is preserved in the Museum für Völkerkunde Leipzig (OAs 6878). She competently used the written sources to understand the lineages and identify the figures portrayed. But she also, p. 214, deduced that the conception of the rebirth-order (as rebirth of Avalokiteśvara) was to be placed in the period 1673–1676. Yet the basic conception of the Dalai Lamas' previous births starting with Avalokiteśvara, Srong-btsan-sgam-po and 'Brom-ston-pa can be traced much earlier than the mid 1600s (and even to the biography of the 1st Dalai Lama, dGe-'dun-grub-pa). See Y. Ishihama (1993), pp. 44f. Lange, p. 218, further proposed that the sponsor of the thangka is the figure "Nor-'dzin-dbang-po" pictured at the top right (i.e. left). This would be impossible for iconographic reasons: the patron must always be pictured at the bottom, if at all. Neither von Stäel-Holstein or Lange had access to sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho's completing fourth volume to the 5th Dalai Lama's autobiography, which included biographical sketches of each previous life.

[464] Y. Ishihama (1993), pp. 48f. describes the 5th Dalai Lama as having "publicized his own lineage of incarnations" by means of pictorial representations, mentioning three murals depicting that subject that he commissioned during this period: at rDzing-phyi monastery in 1644 (Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, vol. 1, f. 122a.5–b.2); in the great hall of the Potala White Palace in 1648 (*ibid.*, f. 142a.3–4); and in the inner sanctuary of the assembly hall at dGa'-ldan-don-gnyis-gling in Lho-brag (*ibid.*, f. 154b.5).

[465] The title *dbu chen* is short for *dbu mdzad chen po* and it designates an artist overseeing many workmen or an entire project. The lesser masters who worked beneath him as foremen of smaller work units were called *dbu chung*.

[466] Rig-'dzin-dpal-'byor, *'Bur sku'i phyag tshad*, introduction. See also Rig-'dzin-dpal-'byor, *Zhi khro rab 'byams* (2nd printing, 1987), p. 43.

[467] See Rig-'dzin-dpal-'byor, *'Bur sku'i phyag tshad*, introduction. See also Rig-'dzin-dpal-'byor, *Zhi khro rab 'byams*, p. 42, who refers to the association of painters in Lhasa as just the *lha bris pa'i skyid sdug*.

[468] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, vol. 1, p. 445.5 (*ka* 223a): *sman thang pa'i dbu chen stag lung dpal mgon/ lha sa skal ldan/ 'brong rtse blo bzang/ mkhyen brtse ba'i dbu mdzad gong dkar gsang sngags mkhar pa/ zho ra dgos kyis gtsos sman mkhyen bsdoms pa drug cu re brgyad kyis zla ba drug la grub pa'i do dam stag ru ba nor bu dang rong dpal gling pas byas.* The "main overseers" (*do dam*) of this project which lasted six months were sTag-ru-ba Nor-bu and Rong dPal-gling-pa.

[469] *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 654.5 (*ka* 323a): *tshe bcu drug nas hor zla lnga pa'i tshes brgyad kyi bar phyi mtshams khog tu gzhis ka shar pa a gur dang ngag dbang 'phrin las gnyis kyis shog khra'i ri mo byas te kun dga' ra ba'i nyi 'od ldebs ris la rgyal rabs dang mkhas grub lo paṇ gyi rnam par thar pa che long las btus pa'i gzhi mi chos skye bo'i byung tshul/ rgyan dam pa chos 'byung gi lo rgyus rags rim gyi dpe don tsam bkod pa'i do dam sde pa 'dar gzhon ngag dbang 'phrin las dang sdings chen nas/ ri mo ba dbu chen sku mdun sman thang pa dang sprul sku dpal mgon gnyis kyis gtsos pa'i drug bcu re gcig gis shin tu dngos gtsang pa sgyu ma'i khengs pa 'phrog nus pa bris/.* In preparation for a subsequent project, one of the steps taken was to search for old thangkas worthy of being used as examples (*ma dper 'os pa'i thang rnying 'tshol*). See *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 646.1.

[470] See S. Karmay (1988a), p. 16, who located references to A-gur in Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, vol. 1, ff. 108b.6 and 286a.3; vol. 2, ff. 152a.4, 153a.5 and 164b.4; and vol. 3, ff. 245a and 246a.3. He was the artist of the golden manuscript illustrated in S. Karmay (1988a).

[471] The name of this sculptor, who was a native of E, appears numerous times in the 5th Dalai Lama's autobiography. See for instance *ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 298.2 (149b) and 643.5 (322a).

[472] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, vol. 1, p. 647.3 (*ka* 324a): *me bya bris 'bur bslabs na'ang nyungs skyon byung gshis 'di lo sprul sku hor dar can la 'bur dang lags a gur la bris gra pa kha shas bslab bcug cing bris thig 'cham dbyangs gtor mdos sogs yon tan gyi rigs gsar bu ba byung rim gyis bslab sbyong byed bcug pa sngags pa'i rigs la gyol le bcu gsum shes na gnad chen po yod do//.*

[473] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, vol. 1, p. 703.1 (*ka* 352a): *lo sngon mar sde pas jo bo rin po che'i zhabs tog la dmigs nas lha sa bar skor la zhig gsos shin tu dngos gtsang ba mdzad pa 'di lo hor zla drug pa'i zla stod nas 'go brtsams ri mo ba dbu chen sman thang nas dang stag lung dpal mgon gnyis kyis thog drangs dbu 'bring dbu chung bsdoms pa bcu bzhi/ byings gya drug/ slob ma bcu rnams kyis las rgyun zla ba phyed bzhi'i bar 'bad pas bsgrubs pa'i do dam sde pa 'dar gzhon dang sgo spe rab 'byams pa chos grags rgya mtsho gnyis kyis byas pa'i byang dngos su sangs rgyas phal po che'i zhing khams rgya mtsho/ shar du 'bum gyi gleng gzhi/ byams pa'i mdzad bcu/ bris sku mthong ba don ldan/ bde ba can gyi zhing bkod/ lhor cho 'phrul gyi bkod pa rnams bris pa'i so sor don bsdu'i zhal byang snyan ngag gi lam nas drangs pa bi wa rta dang bcas pa bkod/ stag lung dpal mgon ri mo mkhas par ma zad blo gzu bor gnas pa'i nyams kyis bkod pa len pas zhing bkod tshogs che zhing dngos gtsang ba'i dper 'os pas phyi nang go ldog pa tsam byung song/.*

[474] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de* (1989–1991), vol. 2, p. 89. Soon thereafter, sprul-sku dPal-mgon was in charge of designing decorative hangings from brocades. See *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 98.

[475] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 154.

[476] One *zho* was a tenth of a *srang* ("ounce"). Here 11.2 *srang* were therefore used.

[477] A *bre* is one twentieth of a *khal*, i.e. it is roughly equivalent to 1.35 pounds or 650 grams.

[478] A *khal* is a unit of weight equivalent to about 25 to 30 pounds or approximately 12 to 14 kilos.

[479] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de* (1989–1991), vol. 2, p. 179.

[480] *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 326ff.

[481] *Ibid.*, pp. 328–9. Tucci also noticed the mention of the artists Rin-spungs Tshe-ri-dbang [=Tshe-dbang-rig-'dzin] and dbu-chen Rags-kha-ba 'Jam-dbyangs-dbang-po as instrumental in the creation of a huge appliqué thangka (*gos sku*). See G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 208, citing the biography, p. 182. Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de* (1989–1991), vol. 3, p. 50, seems also to mention a painter named Legs-pa-rgyan in a passage referring to the year 1677.

[482] See Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de* (1989–1991), vol. 3, p. 77: *rags kha 'jam dbyangs dbang pos bskul ba'i sman thang pa yab sras rgyud 'dzin rags bsdus dang bcas pa la gsol 'debs smon lam.*

[483] A collection of over nine hundred and fifty versified prayers and benedictions (a total of 419 folios) are found in vols. *wa* and *sha* of the 5th Dalai Lama's collected works in the compilation: *sMon lam shis brjod brtan bzhugs sogs kyi tshigs su bcad pa rab dkar dge ba'i chu klung* (Tohoku nos. 5671A-B). Furthermore, a collection of some two hundred and seventy praises and prayers to Tibetan masters are found in vol. 15 (*ba*) of his collected works under the title: *mKhas shing grub pa'i dbang phyug dam pa rnams gtso bor gyur pa'i bla ma'i bstod tshogs kyi rim pa* (Tohoku no. 5654).

[484] Dalai bla-ma V, *Zab pa dang*, vol. 1, pp. 38f. The passage and lineage is as follows: *sha ri bus zhus pa dang bde mchog sdom 'byung las gsungs pas mtshon mdo rgyud las nye bar byung ba'i sangs rgyas byang sems khro bo sogs kyi sku'i thig rtsa thams cad mkhyen pa bu ston zhabs kyis mdzad pa dang/ de'i gsal byed du gyur pa dbyangs can mas rjes su bzung ba rta nag ra* [=ri] *mkhar ba dpal ldan blo gros bzang pos mdzad pa'i yi ge'i steng nas thig rtsa'i rim pa zhib mor nos pa'i brgyud pa ni/ sman bla don grub pa/ sku mdun 'jam dpal dbyangs/ sdom brtson blo bzang rgya mtsho/ mkhas mchog yon tan rgya mtsho/ dpyod ldan chu bzang sprul sku/ rigs 'dzin chen po gzhon nu don grub/ shes bya kun mkhyen chos dbyings rang grol/ des bdag la'o//.*

[485] The treatise of Bya bKra-shis-dar-rgyas is believed to survive at Yale University (in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library?). Gu-ru bKra-shis, p. 1005, mentions the work of Bya bKra-shis-dar-rgyas as well as that of dge-slong Hūṃ-ka-ra: *dge slong hūṃ ka ras byas pa'i legs bshad pad dkar dang bya bkra shis dar rgyas sogs kyi*[*s*] *mdzad pa'i yi ge dang....* A. Chayet (1994), p. 165, n. 650, notes that the latter work survives in the British Museum (no. 11374), and that it seems to be the same work as the *Legs par bshad pa padma dkar po'i chun po* published from Gangtok in 1981. dGe-slong Hūṃ-ka-ra's work has also definitely been published under the title *brTag thabs padma dkar po'i 'chun po* (Dolanji: Tashi Dorje, 1979), attributed here to "sNgags-'chang Hūṃ-ka-ra-dza-ya."

[486] Dalai bla-ma V, *Zab pa dang*, vol. 1, p. 39.2: *rgya dkar nag gi bzo bos bskrun pa'i sangs rgyas byang sems kyi sku brnyan/ rol mo/ dkar yol/ gos dar/ go mtshon/ rta sogs dngos spyad kyi rigs rnams brtag thabs kyi bstan bcos sngon gyi yi ge rnying pa'i rigs dang khyad par grum stod lha sa paṇ chen dang bya bkra shis dar rgyas kyis mdzad pa'i yi ge dang dngos po rnams ngo 'phrod par zhib tu bstar ba'i brgyud pa ni/ sde pa lha sa rdzong pa paṇ chen/ mtsho sgo ba grags pa rdo rje/ paṇḍi ta chen po smon gro pa tshe dbang don grub/ sprul sku mdo sngags gling pa/ dpyod ldan gzug po ba gzhon nu skal bzang/ des bdag la'o// yang rgya dkar nag gi rten brtag pa'i brgyud lugs gcig ni/ kun mkhyen tshe dbang don grub nas/ paṇ chen 'jam dbyangs dbang rgyal rdo rje/ de bdag la'o//.*

[487] See for example Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de* (1989–1991), vol. 3, p. 2: *rin 'byung gi brgya thang*, and also p. 8: *sgrol dkar brgya thang*. See also *ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 127 (referring to the year 1678): *tsong kha pa'i thang sku gsum.*

[488] See S. Karmay (1988a), p. 17, and H. Stoddard in *ibid.*, p. 25. See also A. Chayet (1994), p. 169.

[489] Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje *et al.* (1985), *Bod kyi thang ka*, plates: 52 and 59. The Management Committee of the Cultural Relics of the TAR, ed. (1992), presented two more of the thangkas from the series: p. 98 (no. 70) sPyan-ras-gzigs Sems-nyid-ngal-gso, and p. 105 (no. 77), Srong-

btsan-sgam-po. Four thangkas from another early (late-17th- or early-18th-c.) series depicting the lives of the Dalai Lamas are preserved in the Musée Guimet. See for instance G. Béguin in M. Rhie and R. Thurman (1991), p. 157 (Khri-srong-lde-btsan); and G. Béguin (1991), pp. 84 ('Brom-ston) and 90 (the 5th Dalai Lama). The latter set, with golden handprints and footprints, would seem to have been commissioned for the longevity of the 5th Dalai Lama or of one of his successors. (See Pl. 31.) Cf. the similar thangka of gTer-bdag gling-pa, with golden handprints and footprints, attributed to the 5th Dalai Lama's patronage in S. Batchelor (1987), p. 232.

490 Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, pp. 109f.

491 Another rNying-ma lama said to have painted a thangka at the 5th Dalai Lama's command soon before the latter's death was sMin-gling lo-chen Dharma-shrī (1654–1717). See H. Stoddard in S. Karmay (1988a), p. 21, n. 12. According to Stephen Batchelor (1987), p. 232, some murals attributed to the same master survive at sMin-grol-gling, especially one of Padmasambhava according to a vision of gTer-bdag-gling-pa, which stands to the side of the entrance to the old assembly hall. Batchelor, p. 232, also presents a thangka of gTer-bdag-gling-pa (1646–1714), commissioned reputedly by the 5th Dalai Lama. The painting has golden handprints and footprints of its main subject, much like the thangkas of Dalai Lamas' previous lives in the Musée Guimet. Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 228.4, described the murals and contents of the gSang-sngags pho-brang built at sMin-grol-gling in 1700–1703 by gTer-bdag-gling-pa and his son. See also bsTan-pa'i-sgron-me, *O rgyan smin grol gling gi dkar chag* (Sining?, Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1992), pp. 81ff., for a detailed description of the murals in the gSang-sngags pho-brang.

492 See S. Karmay (1988a), p. 9. See also Dalai bla-ma V, *Zur thams cad mkhyen pa*, xylograph ed., pp. 140, 146f., etc. (*ta* 69b, 72b-73a).

493 The biography of Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol by the 5th Dalai Lama, described by Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 166f., has been published from Thimphu, Bhutan, 1979, based on a manuscript. Another version exists in vol. 9 (*ta*) of the 5th Dalai Lama's collected works, Zhol edition.

494 Dalai bla-ma V, *Zab pa dang*, vol. 1, pp. 38.

495 Dalai bla-ma V, *Zur thams cad mkhyen pa* (1979 ed.), p. 113; vol. 9, p. 65.2 (*ta* 32a). The same work (1979 ed., p. 121) records the painting of certain images by his father in the iron-monkey year (1620?). For other mentions of more of Zur's own artistic activities, see further *ibid.*, pp. 167.5 (1979 ed.), (=*ta* 47a-b, xylograph ed.), and 229.2.

496 Dalai bla-ma V, *Zur thams cad mkhyen pa*, xylograph ed., p. 105.4 (*ta* 52a). This painter appears in the iconometric lineage of both Zur and the 5th Dalai Lama, and he apparently flourished in the early or mid 16th century. A master "slob-dpon rab-'byams-pa sMan-thang-pa" is mentioned in *ibid.*, p. 91.1 (*ta* 45a).

497 *Ibid.*, *ta* 62b.2.

498 Dalai bla-ma V, *Zur thams cad mkhyen pa* (Lhasa Zhol ed., reprint Gangtok), f. 76a: *chos khri'i 'du khang gi ldebs bris rnams phyag bstar te gnang ba'i sman bla bde gshegs brgyad kyi la la mkhyen lugs 'ga' re sman lugs dang rnam grol ba lta bu rdzu 'phrul gyi phyag gis 'du mdzad/ gnas bcu rgyal gyi si thang la cha bzhag bzheng bar gnang ba lha bzo ba dmangs mas mdangs tshon bcad gsum gyi 'phro 'thud nas legs par grub/.*

499 See *ibid.*, vol. *ta*, ff. 69b-70a.

500 See *ibid.*, vol. *ta*, f. 74b. The same biography, f. 35a.6, also refers to the yearly making of a hundred-image thangka (*brgya thang*) of White Tārā for the longevity of a lama. On f. 76b.2 there is a reference to the executing of a one-day thangka (*nyin thang*), and on f. 89b, a reference to the making of images by the Newar artist Guṇa.

501 Dalai bla-ma V, *Zur thams cad mkhyen pa* (1979 ed.), p. 113; vol. 9, p. 65.2 (*ta* 32a): *rjes su chos kyi phrin las che drags pa'i gnang long mi yong ba ma gtogs zhi khro'i sku gang la'ang lhongs shin tu che zhing/ zhing bkod sogs che phra tshang mar nyams dod pas lha bris pa chos dbyings su grags pa'i khengs pa can gyis kyang khong gis bla ma ma mdzad par nged tsho ltar ri mo nyag bskyangs na sman thang 'jam dbyangs pa lta bu'i 'gran zla dang bral ba kho na yong rgyur 'dug ces gleng/.* After his death, his reliquary stūpa at Tshal Gung-thang was planned by gZhis-ka-shar Lags A-gur. The stūpa was completed and consecrated in 1658. See *ibid.*, xylograph ed., pp. 237–38 (*ta* 118a-b).

502 The rumor was still current among prominent Khams-pa scholars and historians of the 20th century, such as Dezhung Rinpoche (1906–1987). The latter explained that it was based on a reference in the sDe-srid's own writings to himself being the "bodily, verbal and spiritual son" (*sku gsung thugs kyi sras*) of the 5th Dalai Lama. Here "bodily son" (*sku'i sras*) would leave itself open to the obvious interpretation "natural son." Cf. L. Petech (1959), p. 380, n. 3, who mentions that this rumor was reported as early as by A. Csoma de Körös, but who thought himself that the rumor was incorrect and seemingly based on some misunderstanding (the sDe-srid was no doubt the Great Fifth's "spiritual son" *thugs kyi sras*).

503 On this source see K. Lange (1969), p. 211f.

504 He was painting a mural depiction of one thousand images (*stong sku*) of Amitāyus in about 1676. See Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de* (1989–1991), vol. 3, p. 37: *pho brang dbu mdzad phun tshogs can gyis ldeb ris la tshe dpag med stong sku bskrun par....*

505 Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 109–110: *sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtshos rgyal ba'i 'khrungs rabs rmad byung skal pa ma gra tshar bris mkhan dbu chen sman thang pa mgon po*

tshe dbang/ pho brang phun tshogs/ lha sa rags kha ba 'jam dbyangs dbang po sogs ri mor mkhas grags tshang ma sman lugs yin par bzhed cing/.

[506] G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 134. See also K. Lange (1969), pp. 207ff., who used or cited the following written works which describe the series of previous rebirths of the Dalai Lamas: (1) Dalai bla-ma V, *'Khrungs rabs kyi zhing bkod 'dri* [sic] *tshul gyi rtogs brjod kha byang dang bcas pa gsal ba'i me long.* Collected works, vol. 15 (*ba*), fols. 23–34?; (2A) sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, *rGyal ba lnga pa'i 'khrungs rab*[s] *rmad byung bskal pa ma,* 13 fols., and (2B) its commentary *Mu thig gi 'phreng ba,* 79 fols; and (3) Pha-bong-kha 'Jam-dbyangs-grags-pa, *Kun gzigs lnga pa'i 'khrungs rabs bco lnga'i rnam thar bdud rtsi'i thig pa.*

[507] Bod rang skyong ljongs rig dngos do dam u yon lhan khang, ed. (1992), p. 63.

[508] *Ibid.,* p. 61.

[509] *Ibid.,* p. 85–93.

[510] See Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje *et al.* (1985), *Bod kyi thang ka,* plates 52 ('Brom-ston) and 59 (Sa-chen). The Management Committee of the Cultural Relics of the TAR, ed. (1992), presented two more of the thangkas from the series: p. 98 (no. 70) sPyan-ras-gzigs Sems-nyid-ngal-gso, and p. 105 (no. 77), Srong-btsan-sgam-po.

[511] H. Stoddard in S. Karmay (1992a), p. 20. See *Tibetan Medical Paintings* (London: Serindia, 1992), and also Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje *et al.* (1985), *Bod kyi thang ka,* plates 130–138. On the life of the artist there also exists the article of Grang Hru'u-tha'i (1988), though, as mentioned above, it is of very limited scholarly value.

[512] sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, *mChod sdong,* vol. 1, pp. 391.1 and 420.3. See also the 1990 ed., p. 271.

[513] sDe-srid, *mChod sdong* (1990 ed.), p. 270. Here one of the ordinary painters is simply listed as "sMan-thang-pa"; evidently he was an ordinary journeyman painter from the village of sMan-thang.

Chapter 8

gTsang-pa Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho and His New sMan-ris

Most of the above-mentioned sMan-ris painters who flourished at least through the mid 17th century probably worked in varieties of the style that later Tibetan scholars would have called the "Old sMan-ris" (*sman rnying* or *sman ris rnying pa*). Paintings described as belonging to this style were not at all rare in Central Tibet before 1959, and notable examples were mentioned by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu at such places as 'Phyong-rgyas Ri-bo-bde-chen, Grwa lDing-po-che, and also the Rwa-sgreng mChod-khang-chen-mo that had been restored by the 5th Dalai Lama.[514] By the mid 17th century, however, a great painter from gTsang province named sprul-sku Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho initiated fresh stylistic trends within the sMan-ris tradition. His tradition—which first became established primarily in his home province, especially at the great Tashilhunpo monastery and the adjoining provincial capital of Shigatse—later became known as the "New sMan-ris" (*sman bris gsar ma*).[515]

His Main Patrons

Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho flourished during the crucial juncture in Tibetan history which, as mentioned above, saw in the year 1642 the gaining of political supremacy in Tibet by the 5th Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho and his political allies, including the Mongol Gushri Khan. Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's main patrons accordingly included that Dalai Lama and the 1st Paṇ-chen bla-ma Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1567–1662),[516] two of the most powerful, influential and discerning men of that age. The Paṇ-chen Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan was, moreover, the ordination abbot of the 5th Dalai Lama and was some fifty years his senior. He was then the *de facto* leader of the dGe-lugs-pa tradition, and he played a fateful role during this difficult and tumultuous period.[517]

Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho is mentioned, for instance, as the chief artist among a large group of master painters from both dBus and gTsang provinces whom the then relatively young 5th Dalai Lama (aged thirty-one) called together in 1648 to paint the murals in the great hall of the White Palace (Pho-brang dkar-po) of the Potala, which was the newly constituted Tibetan government's seat. The subjects painted at that time included the history of Buddhism's spread in Tibet beginning with the origin of human life in Tibet,[518] and also, following the wishes of the "secular ruler" (*sde pa*), the sequence of previous and later rebirths of the "first" Dalai Lama dGe-'dun-grub (1391–1474).[519] Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's contacts with the 1st Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, however, were much more extensive, which is not at all surprising given their common geographic origins in gTsang. Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho is said to have been originally a monk of Tashilhunpo, and as such he was no doubt also a religious disciple of Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan. He is said to have belonged originally to the Chos-sbugs regional dormitory there.[520]

Fig. 110. Tashilhunpo Monastery. Detail of thangka, after Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 23.



Fig. 112. The 5th Dalai Lama. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 575 (a 287a).

Fig. 111. Tashilhunpo Monastery. After Snellgrove and Richardson (1969), p. 46. Photograph C. Bell.



Fig. 113. The 1st Paṇ-chen Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 883. (Compare with Pl. 45).

Since he acted as chief overseer (*dbu che*) during the extensive building activities of the 1st Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che, he gained the title of *dbu mdzad*. In addition to his skills in painting, he was also an accomplished sculptor, woodworker and brocade tailor.[521] According to tradition, he even composed a treatise on the subject of tailoring (*breg dpe'i bstan bcos*). It is also said that after completing any sacred image or object for use in religious worship he would compose dedication prayers in verse that he would have inscribed on the back of the object, though examples of this have apparently not survived the ravages of the Cultural Revolution.[522]

Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho painted murals of Buddhas and the Sixteen Elders at dBen-dgon in 1645 under the already quite venerable (seventy-eight-year-old) Paṇ-chen Rinpoche's patronage, three years before he painted in Lhasa for the Great Fifth.[523] In 1647 he completed at Tashilhunpo for the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che a group of twelve thangkas, these paintings portraying the Great Deeds of the Buddha, the Sixteen Elders, Maitreya in teaching gesture, a detailed biography of Tsong-kha-pa, and the lives of rGyal-ba Blo-bzang-don-grub and mKhas-grub Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes (1525–91). These thangkas were then framed with exquisite silks and brocades.[524] In 1649, after returning from Lhasa to gTsang and Tashilhunpo, he planned and sketched a huge brocade thangka of Maitreya.[525] In 1655, he produced a tour de force in his murals and decorations of the assembly hall for the Tantric College (*sngags grwa*) at the great Tashilhunpo monastery, and in 1656 he created still more images there.[526] Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho was once again at Tashilhunpo in 1662 and in the subsequent year, playing a crucial role in designing and decorating the exquisite reliquary stūpa and chapel after the 1st Paṇ-chen's death at the grand old age of ninety-five.[527] It is said that he even did some of the woodwork himself during the making of that chapel, and that the carpentry tools he used then were later kept among the treasures of the Chos-sbug regional dormitory.[528] Other doings of his are recorded in the Paṇ-chen's autobiography and in later histories of Tashilhunpo.[529]

Characteristics of his Style

According to the recent Tibetan historian Shakabpa, the New sMan-ris style for which Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho became famous was considered a sophisticated fusion of the earlier sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris styles, with the occasional employment of special features and new models.[530] It seems likely, however, that his New sMan-ris was primarily a continuation of the sMan-ris (just as its name would imply) though partially transformed by his own genius and, I suspect, also influenced by some new Chinese compositional and coloring ideas. The most detailed traditional description of his style is found in the anonymous art manual *Ri mo mkhan*, verses 13–15:

> The divine bodies have many ornaments and are perfect in their beauty or ugliness. By the bodily postures, dances and strutting gestures, and the forms of such things as fluttering robes, clouds, fire and wind, the decorative patterns (?), designs, flowers, waves, trees, birds, game animals, and gestures of human bodies, the charm of the landscape, rocky crags, slate [mountains] and glaciers, and by the form of waterfalls, jewels, etc., the [viewer's] mind is enchanted by the many emotional expressions (*nyams*) and feelings (*'gyur ba*). (13a-14d)
>
> This wonder which thus arises as a beautifying ornament for [Tibet], the land of glaciers, and bestows [a refreshing] nectar to the eyes was born from the representational artistry of the sMan-gsar [-ba] Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho, which is a festival delighting gods and men! (15a-d)

Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho was one of the leading artists from both dBus and gTsang patronized by the 5th Dalai Lama at the Potala in 1648 when the latter was also trying to have painted in the bKa'-gyur lha-khang the *Lam rim* lineage in the old Bye'u style, a manner that was obviously foreign to the ordinary repertoires of those painters. But it is not certain that Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho himself actually participated in that stylistic experiment.[531]

Examples of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's paintings survive to this day at his main center of activity, the monastery Tashilhunpo, seat of the Paṇ-chen Lamas. According to the account of the recent Tashilhunpo master painter Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, murals painted by Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho can still be seen for instance in the



Pl. 34. The Buddha's display of miracles on the eighth day. Mural, mThong-ba-don-ldan Chapel, Tashilhunpo, mid-17th c. The work of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho? Photograph M. Henss, 1982.

private residence quarters (*gzims chung*) of the Pho-brang rGyal-mtshan-mthon-po, where one can see a portrait of the 1st Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che and a depiction of the Buddha's displaying of miraculous powers (*ston pa'i cho 'phrul*). In the mThong-ba-don-ldan chapel above the assembly hall there are additional murals by him showing the Descent from the Heavens (*lha babs dus chen*) and the Miracles displayed on the Eighth Day (*cho 'phrul tshes brgyad skabs*).[532]

Pl. 35. Detail of mural, mThong-ba-don-ldan Chapel, Tashilhunpo, mid-17th c. The work of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho? Photograph M. Henss, 1982.

Pl. 36. Detail of mural, mThong-ba-don-ldan Chapel, Tashilhunpo, mid-17th c. The work of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho? Photograph M. Henss, 1982.



Pl. 37. Detail of mural, mThong-ba-don-ldan Chapel, Tashilhunpo, mid-17th c. The work of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho? Photograph M. Henss, 1982.



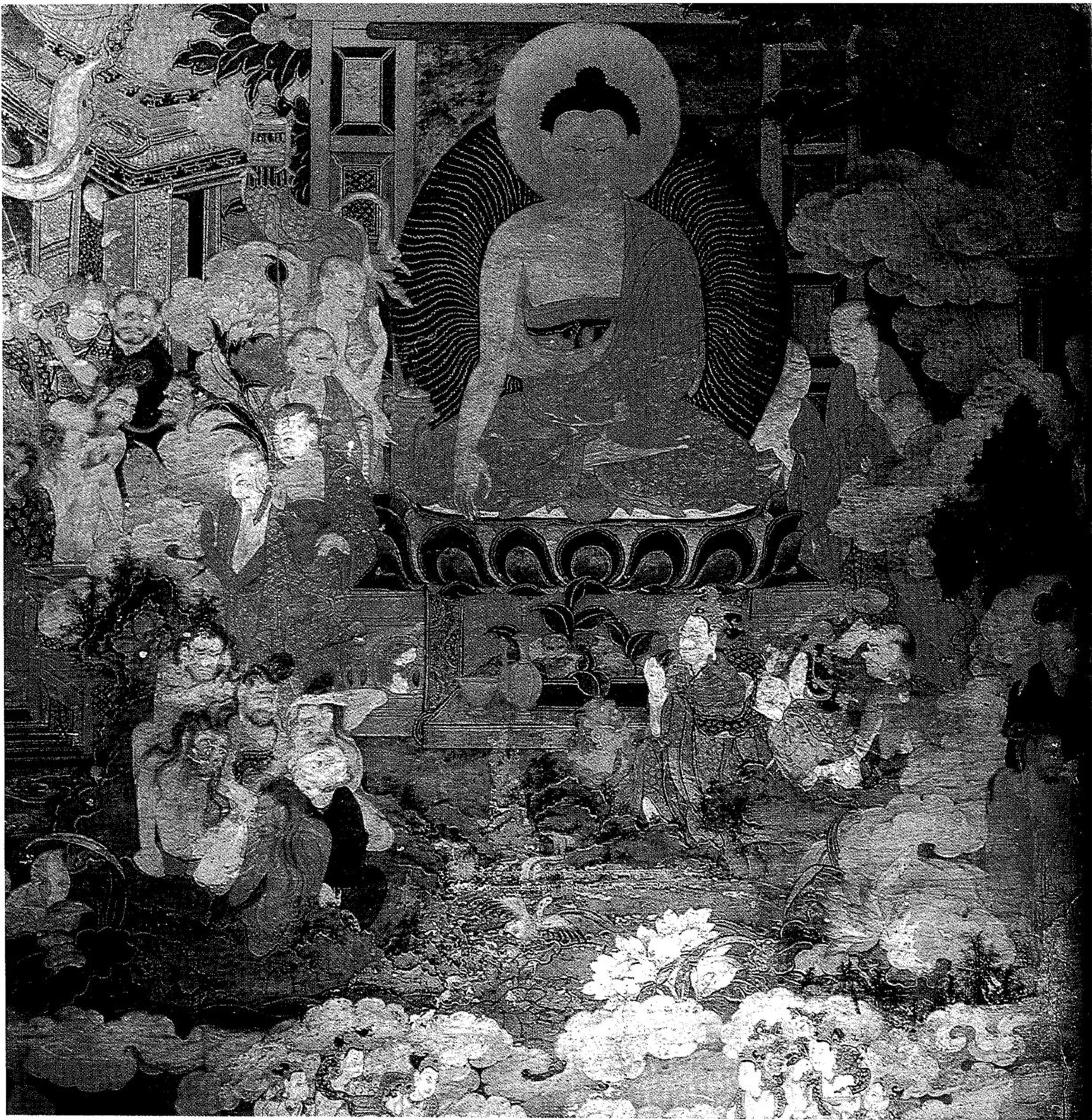
Pl. 38. Detail of mural, mThong-ba-don-ldan Chapel, Tashilhunpo, mid-17th c. The work of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho? Photograph M. Henss, 1982.



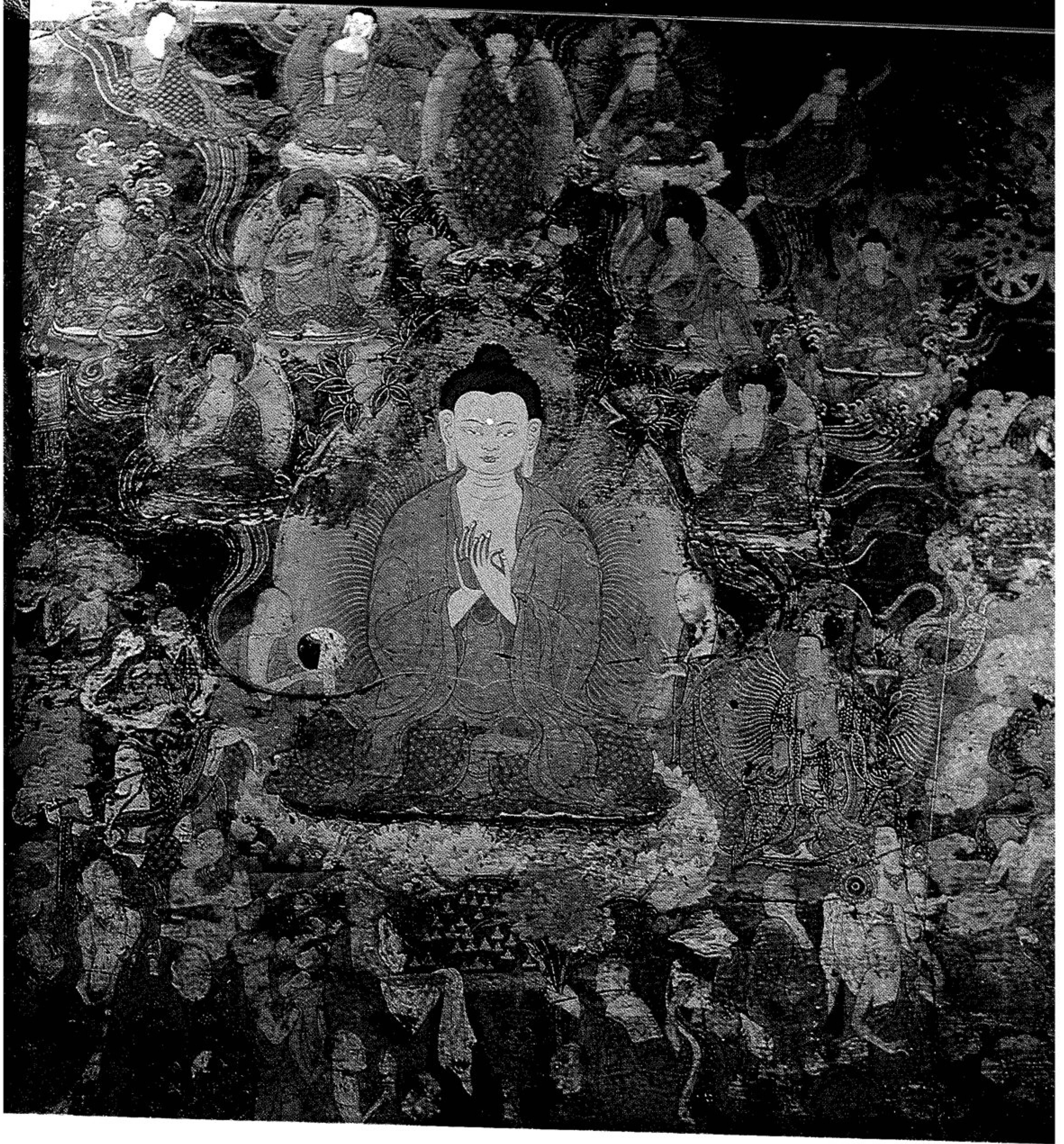
Pl. 39. Buddha's descent from the heavens. Detail of mural, entrance, mThong-ba-don-ldan Chapel, Tashilhunpo, mid-17th c. The work of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho? Photograph M. Henss, 1982.



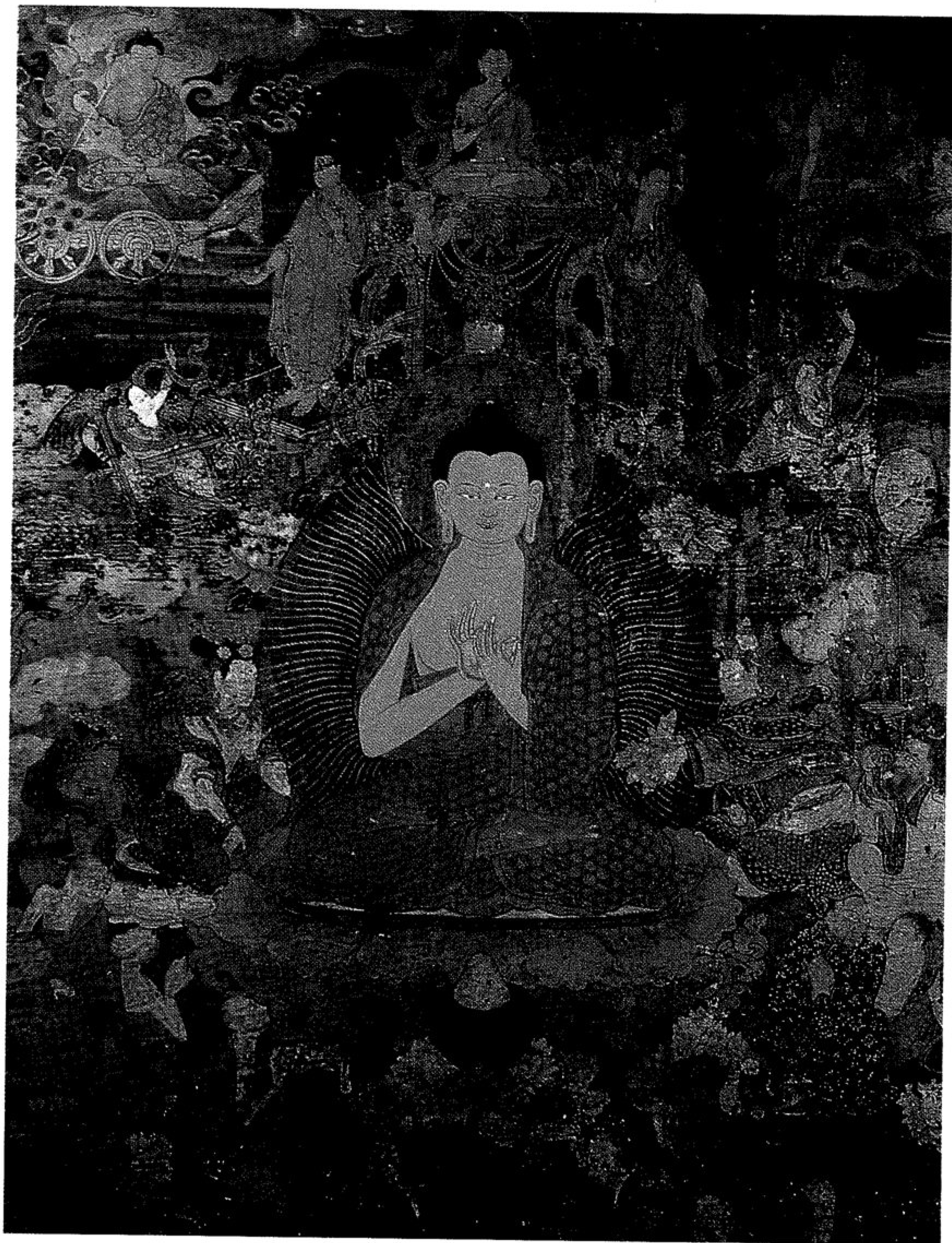
Pl. 40. The Buddha Śākyamuni's display of miracles. Detail of one in a series of probably mid-17th c. Tashilhunpo murals. (Possibly the work of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho.) After Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals, p. 131, pl. 121.



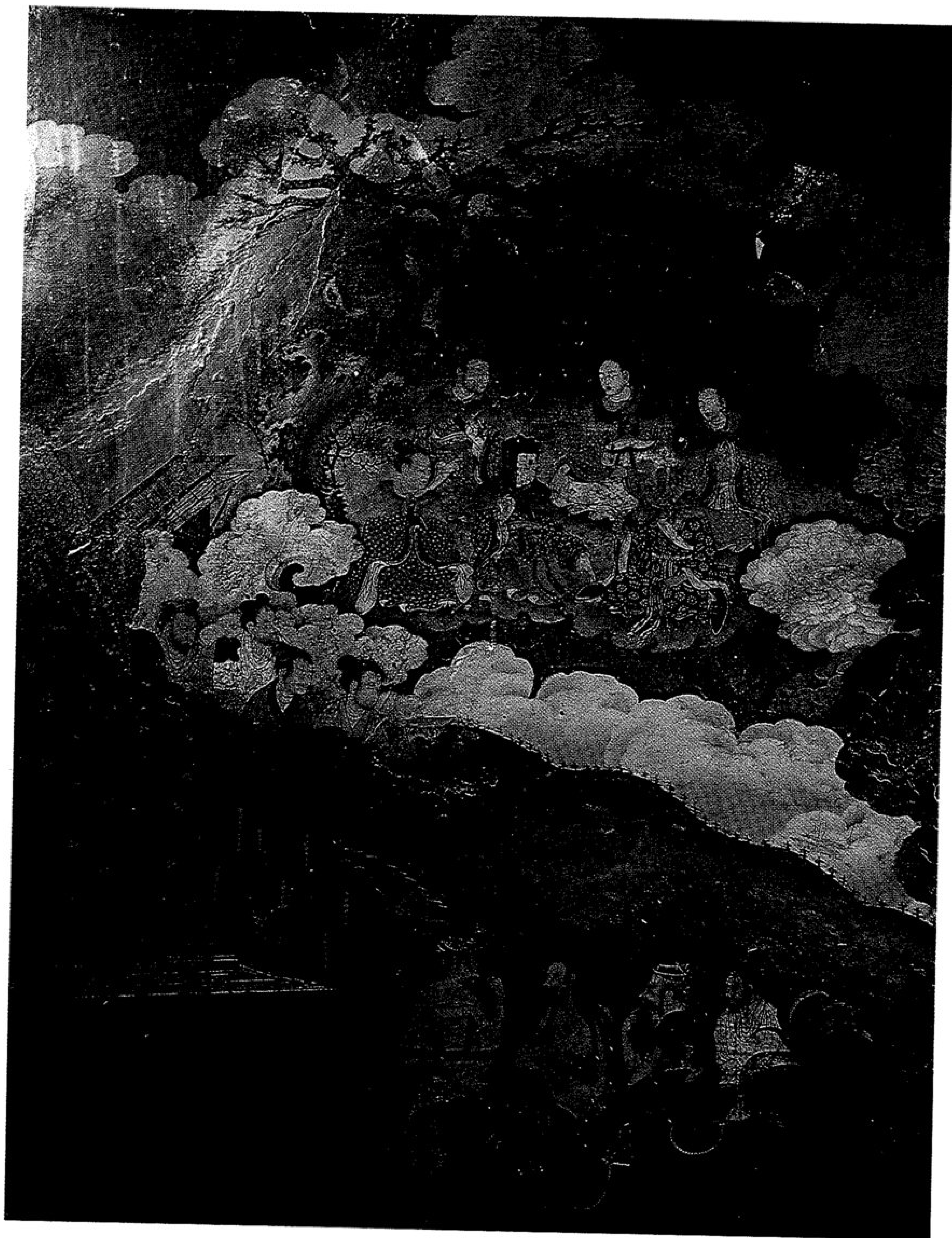
Pl. 41. The Buddha Śākyamuni's display of miracles. Detail of one in a series of probably mid-17th c. Tashilhunpo murals. After Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals, p. 129, pl. 119.



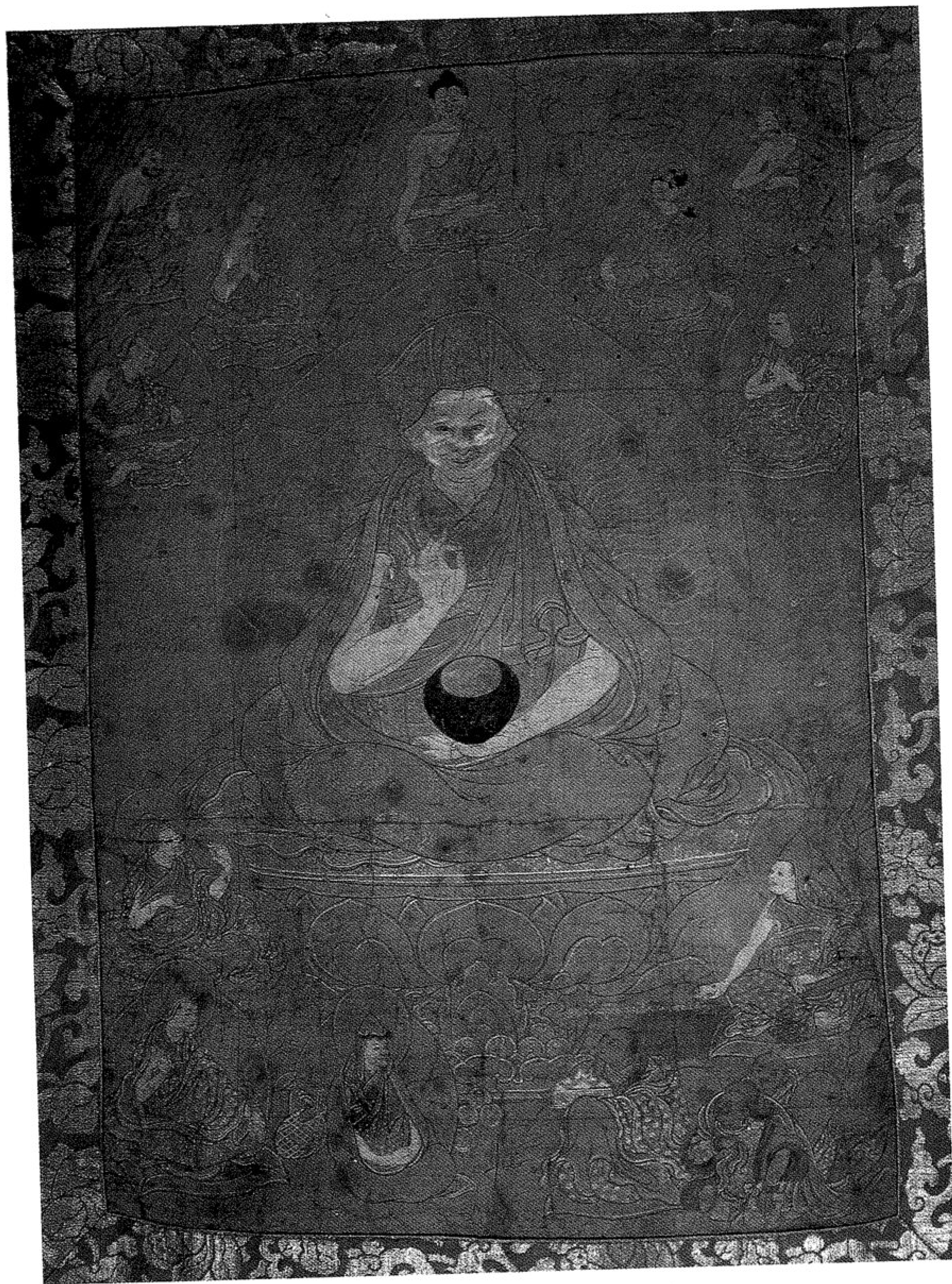
Pl. 42. The Buddha Śākyamuni's display of miracles. Detail of one in a series of probably mid-17th c. Tashilhunpo murals. The face and hands of the main figure have been repainted. After Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals, p. 135, pl. 125.



Pl. 43. The Buddha Śākyamuni's display of miracles. Detail of one in a series of (17th c.?) Tashilhunpo murals. The face and hands of the main figure have been repainted. After Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals, p. 136, pl. 126.



Pl. 44. Brahmanical sages, opponents of the Buddha. Detail of a Tashilhunpo mural, exact location and age not yet determined (mid 17th c.?). After Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals, p. 47, pl. 34.



Pl. 45. The 1st Paṇ-chen Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, with depictions of his previous lives. Portrait by the Tashilhunpo court artist Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho. Thangka, Tashilhunpo, mid-17th c., 70 x 41 cm. Now preserved at Tashilhunpo. After Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 75.




Fig. 114 and 115. The 1st Paṇ-chen Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, with depictions of his previous lives. Now preserved in Tashilhunpo. Details of golden thangka by Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho, after Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 75.

In addition, at least one thangka painting by his hand is known to survive: a golden thangka (*gser thang*) that portrays as its main figure Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's patron the 1st Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che.[533] Also shown as smaller figures above and around the main figure are the series of masters held to have been the successive previous lives of the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che. In this painting under the figure of the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che there is an inscription, perhaps left by the artist himself: "Well painted by Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho" (*chos dbyings rgya mtshos legs par bris*). Here one notes in the faces and postures a highly expressive realism; Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho would have been a master portraitist in any country or age. There is, however, in his work a tendency toward over-dramatization in the treatment of some minor figures. But even the slightly exaggerated vignette of patrons or supplicants in the lower right corner is carried off successfully here since the main figure is portrayed with considerable dignity and affection. Unfortunately this thangka with its monochrome gold color scheme gives no indication of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's more normal treatment of color and landscape. (The thangka also shows some oil spots and discoloration of the flesh-colored pigment on faces.) (See Pl. 45.)

Another thangka with some stylistic similarities, though again without a normal palette, is a painting portraying the Buddha's display of magical powers in the same publication (Bod kyi thang ka, plate no. 41), where a highly skilled portraitist has with great delight depicted in the foreground a number of picaresque details of the Tīrthika masters' defeat (Fig. 116). It is recorded that Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho painted murals of this theme, and one could probably be forgiven for suspecting here too the expert hand of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho himself or one of his followers.

But the depiction of this theme had become an occasion for the display of special virtuosity by artists already a century or more before. As mentioned above, an exceptional 16th-century thangka portraying the Buddha's Miracles by the master sMan-thang-nas Blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho was greatly admired and copied onto paper by Zur-



Fig. 116. Defeat of the Brahmanical teachers, a miracle of the Buddha. Thangka, 91 x 62 cm. Now preserved in Potala Palace, Lhasa. Detail, after Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 41.

chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol at dGa'-ldan-khang-gsar in ca. 1633–34.[534]

A further important hint about Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's style is given by the 19th-century A-mdo bibliographer A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho (1803–1875), who records the existence of inscriptions written by Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho to supplement a series of depictions of the previous lives of his main patron, the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che (*Paṇ chen chos rgyan gyi sku phreng zhal thang ljags bkod ma'i kha byang*).[535] Here we have further proof that Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho personally designed (*ljags bkod*) the earliest known portrayals of this famous series, the first *surviving* example by his hand being the golden thangka mentioned above that depicts within a single painting the previous embodiments as minor figures around the main figure of the 1st Paṇ-chen. (Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho is also recorded to have led the group of painters who painted depictions of the successive previous lives of the 5th Dalai Lama at the Potala in 1648, the earliest such portrayal of this series known to me, and elsewhere an exquisite ten-thangka set depicting the same subject was attributed to him.)[536]

Two very fine examples from a set showing the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che's successive embodiments, including one that depicts Sa-skya Paṇḍita in debate with the Brahmanical paṇḍita Harinanda at sKyid-grong, were brought out of Tibet in the 1930s by G. Tucci.[537] The latter was full of enthusiastic admiration for these paintings, stating: "Both are by the same hand and can be classed among the most sumptuous specimens of Tibetan art, renewed by its contact with the style of the Chinese XVIIIth century."[538] Tucci arrived at this dating to the mid 1700s mainly, it seems to me, on the basis of his datings of the Narthang printing blocks, and then constructed the rest of his hypothesis to fit these dates. He thought the first group of twelve blocks could not have been carved before 1737, the date of death of the 2nd Paṇ-chen, who was the last figure portrayed.

The above dating of the two thangkas described by Tucci may have been correct regarding the time of their actual painting. But here we must distinguish between dating the surviving thangkas and dating the originals upon which they were based.



Pl. 46. Sa-skya Paṇḍita. Thangka, late 17th or 18th c., 62.3 x 35.6 cm. The Newark Museum, P14. Published: G. Tucci (1949), pl. 87; V. Reynolds et al. (1986), p. 158. Photograph by John Bigelow Taylor.



Fig. 117. Sa-skya Paṇḍita. Xylograph, 18th-century, Narthang. From the series of Paṇ-chen Lamas' lives. After Tucci (1949), fig. 95.



Fig. 118. Sa-skya Paṇḍita. Woven thangka, China, early 20th c., 70 x 41.5 cm. Now preserved in Potala Palace, Lhasa. A weaving based on the Narthang xylograph series of Paṇ-chen Lamas' lives. After Bod kyi thang ka, pl. 60.



Fig. 119. Subhūti. Xylograph, 18th-century, Narthang. From the series of Paṇ-chen Lamas' lives. After Tucci (1949), fig. 90.





Fig. 120. Bhāvaviveka. Detail of Narthang xylograph showing foreground of a composition of one of the series of Paṇ-chen Lamas' lives. After Tucci (1949), fig. 93.

Fig. 121. bSod-nams-phyogs-glang. Detail of Narthang xylograph showing foreground of composition. From the series of Paṇ-chen Lamas' lives. After Tucci (1949), fig. 98.

Fig. 122. "Grub-pa'i-dbang-phyug." Detail of Narthang xylograph showing foreground of composition. From the series of depictions of the Paṇ-chen Lamas' lives. After Tucci (1949), fig. 99.

The extant thangkas were probably copies based on an older set (or even derived from xylographs), and thus Tucci's dating may have been a half a century or more too late, at least concerning the *original models* for the blocks. The original set of paintings probably did have an important connection with the Tashilhunpo court and with an artist who created sensational effects through the use of certain new Chinese elements, etc.[539] Moreover, the painter ultimately responsible for this outstanding work may well have been the famous Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho, even though we have no way of knowing whether the originals were actually painted by his own hand or by one of his major pupils following his exact instructions. In sum, none of the evidence excludes the possibility that the *original* paintings were by Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho (or directly planned by him) and that the well-known xylograph blocks of this series were then carved only later; indeed, some important evidence (the reference of A-khu Ching) speaks in favor of this hypothesis.[540]

It seems likely that the blocks were meant to record and disseminate the compositions of a particularly brilliant earlier set of paintings, adding one later figure (that of the 2nd Paṇ-chen) to make the lineage full and thus bring it up to date at the time of block carving. (The blocks were sponsored by the 2nd Paṇ-chen's students and could have been carved either before or after his death in 1737.[541]) Moreover an examination of the final, i.e. twelfth, block of the first group, namely that depicting the 2nd Paṇ-chen, reveals at once an important difference from the first eleven.



Fig. 123. The 1st Pan-chen Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan. Xylograph, 18th-century, Narthang. From the series of depictions of the Paṇ-chen Lamas' lives. After Tucci (1949), fig. 100.



Fig. 124. The 2nd Paṇ-chen Blo-bzang-ye-shes. Xylograph, 18th-century, Narthang. From the series of depictions of the Paṇ-chen Lamas' lives. After Tucci (1949), fig. 101.

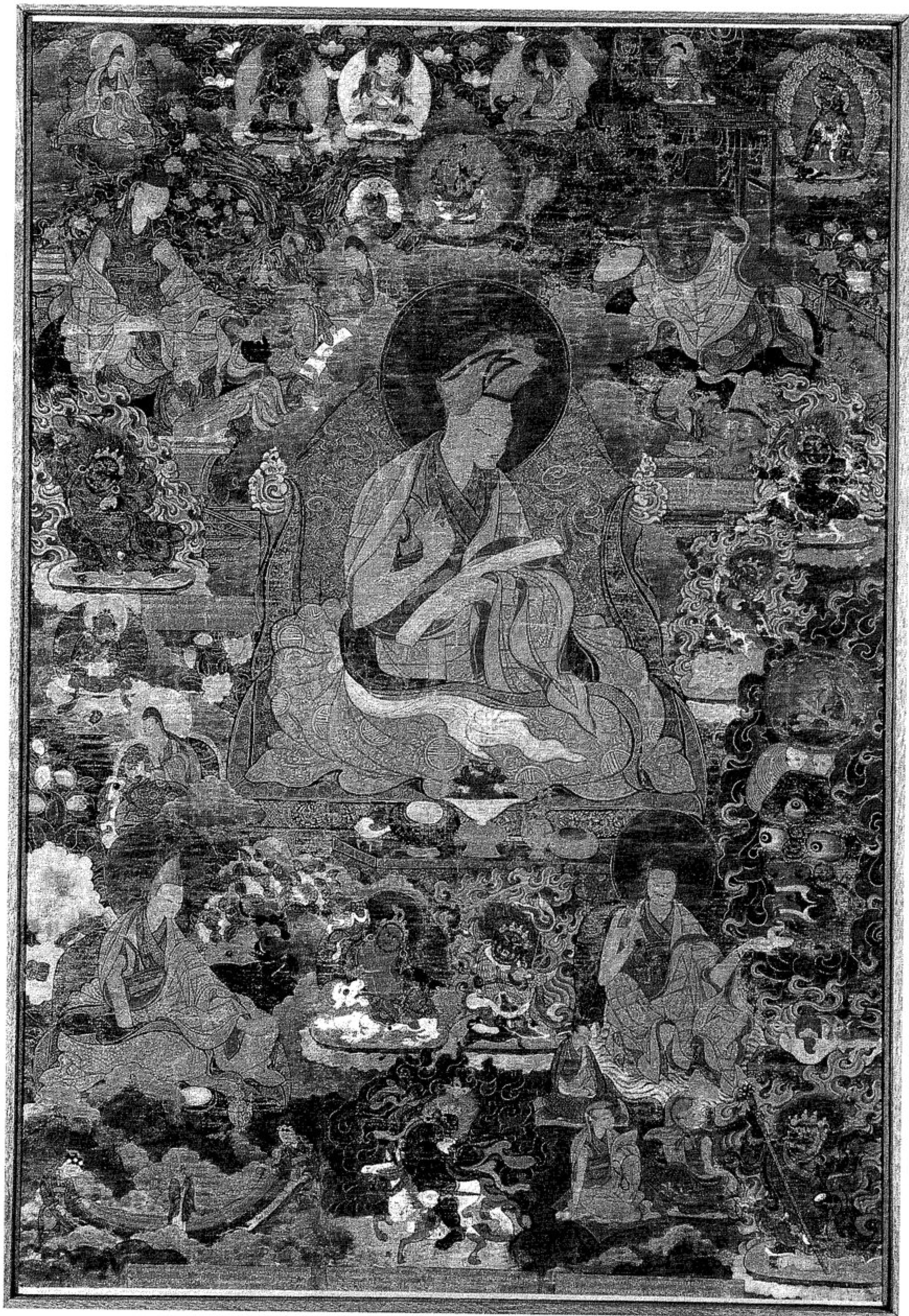


Fig. 125. Portrait of the 1st Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che, Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan. Thangka, 18th-19th c., 73.6 x 49 cm. The Newark Museum P15, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Eric Berger, 1984. Published: V. Reynolds et al. (1986), p. 161.

The composition of this last one is stiff and much less striking; its lower foreground is filled with an extra deity which makes this depiction obviously different from the more open and dynamic compositions of all the others. By contrast, the compositions of the first eleven in the set, i.e. up to the 1st Paṇ-chen, are more homogeneous in style, and they also contain little details which hint at Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's having been the artist who painted or planned the original. Moreover, some of the figures are similarly depicted in the gold thangka.[542]

Perhaps it will be possible later to establish Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's connection with the later carved set with the help of other sources, particularly if the above-mentioned inscriptions to the thangka series attributed to him by A-khu Ching do finally turn up and their verses are found to be the same as those appearing beneath the block-prints. It was not that common for a series of thangkas to be painted with a fixed series of prayers written out below. But as mentioned above, it was typical of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho to write verses (of dedication prayers) to accompany even his lesser productions.[543] Admittedly this is still circumstantial evidence, and more concrete proof will be needed for a final judgment. A few hours of unhindered investigation among the thangkas and murals at Tashilhunpo might suffice to settle the question.



Fig. 126. The 1st Paṇ-chen Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 211.

Later Spread and Influence of the New sMan-ris

Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's "New sMan-ris" style has often been said to have been instrumental in shaping the artistic koiné that became prevalent in dBus province of central Tibet from the 18th century onwards.[544] But his direct influence was probably stronger in particular on the development of the later Tashilhunpo or Shigatse school, which was the later gTsang style *par excellence*.[545] He was in fact a sort of "court artist" to the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che, and his New sMan-ris would seem to have been centered, initially at least, mainly at his great patron's court. Later upholders of the mainstream sMan-ris style in dBus province, including some recent Lhasa artists, evidently have not held their tradition to be descended mainly from the New sMan-ris of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho; instead, they consider themselves to be the modern direct successors to the original Old sMan-ris (*sman rnying*).[546] Indeed, it was probably not the rich, almost baroque style of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho and the subsequent Tashilhunpo court painters that developed later into what some have called the "international style." Rather, it was a lighter, simpler but at the same time more conservative style that gained widespread patronage and approval among the clergy of the great Lhasa monasteries and which thus became the official style propagated elsewhere.[547] The latter was also an easier style, and thus better suited for widespread adoption than either of the high court styles of Lhasa or Tashilhunpo.[548]

Nevertheless, Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho did find many admirers and followers also in dBus. He is mentioned prominently for instance in a list of artists who were influential in the painting lineages that became established in southern Tibet.[549] Some works attributed to him also survived down to the 20th century outside of gTsang province. An extremely fine set of ten thangkas in the

New sMan-ris ("sMan-gsar") style depicting the successive embodiments of the Dalai Lamas and attributed to the hand of the sMan-gsar-ba Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho was later preserved at the Phun-rab estate in Phyong-rgyas where it was seen by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu.[550] Furthermore the same pilgrim saw at Grwa lDing-po-che in the Bla-ma lha-khang a matchless depiction of the eighty siddhas (on thangkas?) painted by dbu-mdzad Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho.[551]

Notes

[514] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, pp. 72.3 (36b), mentions seeing in the Rwa-sgreng mChod-khang-chen-mo: *sman rnying bka' gdams bla brgyud/ pha chos/ bu chos sogs logs bris chen po mang du bris pa/.* At 'Phyong-rgyas Ri-bo-bde-chen, Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 284.4 (142b), describes having seen: *lha bzo phul gyur sman bris rnying pa legs.* While at Grwa lDing-po-che (p. 183.3, 92a) he describes having seen an exquisite set of three thangkas of the Buddha (?) and twenty-three thangkas of the Sixteen Elders: *thub pa gsum/ gnas brtan sman rnying tshon gser gos 'gran bral ma nyer gsum thog sleb ma sogs thang ka.*

[515] Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho is mentioned as the originator of the New sMan-ris by Kong-sprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, pt. 1, p. 572.1 (*oṃ* 209a). See also Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 284.4 (142b), who mentions a set of ten thangkas by the same artist depicting the line of previous rebirths of the 5th Dalai Lama, referring to Chos-dbyings-rgya-tsho as the "sMan-gsar-ba."

[516] By another method of reckoning that takes mKhas-grub-rje as the "1st Paṇ-chen," he was retroactively the "4th Paṇ-chen."

[517] In 1637 there had been a serious dispute at dGa'-ldan over the abbatial succession. In 1638 when it was time for his monastic ordination, the 5th Dalai Lama took it not there but from Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, who in any case had been since 1617 the abbot of 'Bras-spungs, later the largest monastery of Tibet and original seat of the Dalai Lama's own bla-brang. According to the 5th Dalai Lama, *Zur thams cad mkhyen pa*, xylograph ed., p. 140 (*ta* 69b), in 1642 it was the Paṇ-chen who took the fateful step of calling up troops for war, which led to the sDe-pa Phrin-las-rgya-mtsho's consulting the Mongols: *gtsang gi skya langs la dpon slob paṇ chen rin po che'i sku zhabs nas/ dmag bskul gyi mi sna bka' shog byung ba ltar sde pa phrin las rgya mtsho er ti na hung tha'i ji'i rtsar rgyu mtshan mol mar btang ba....*

[518] For thangkas on these themes, see Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje *et al.* (1985), *Bod kyi thang ka*, plates 7–14, and 16–22.

[519] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, vol. 1, p. 283.4 (*ka* 142a). This was cited by G. Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 209, as sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho's biography of the 5th Dalai Lama. The Tibetan text: *po ta la'i tshoms chen logs bris la bod du 'gro ba'i byung tshul las brtsams te bstan pa dar ba'i lo rgyus/ de thog sde pa'i dgongs pa bzhin rje dge 'dun grub kyi 'khrungs rabs snga phyi rnams sprul sku chos dbyings rgya mtshos gtsos pa'i dbus gtsang gi lha bris pa mkhas mang bsdus nas bkod/.* It may be possible to identify these murals if they still survive in the Potala. See also *ibid.,* (1989–1991), vol. 3, p. 2, where there is the mention of: *lha bris chos dbyings pa'i 'dzin shul.*

[520] Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 5.

[521] These would have been unusual occupations for a monk.

[522] Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 5.

[523] Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, p. 261.2 (131a): *pir thogs dbang po chos dbyings rgya mtshos mgon byas/ gtsug lag khang bde bar gshegs pa dang 'phags pa'i gnas brtan la sogs pa'i sku brnyan gyi ri mo 'jig rten kun gyi mig gi bdud rtsi spungs pa lta bus mdzes par byas pa dang/.* See also E. G. Smith's Introduction to the autobiography, p. 6, n. 23.

[524] Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, p. 267.6 (134a): *de yang bdag cag gi ston pa'i mdzad pa ngo mtshar ba gtso bo 'ga' zhig dang/ 'phags pa'i gnas brtan bcu drug/ rje btsun byams pa 'chad rgya tshul bstan pa'i rnam thar/ rje thams cad mkhyen pa tsong kha pa chen po'i rnam* [134b] *thar rgyas pa/ rgyal ba blo bzang don grub dang mkhas grub sangs rgyas ye shes kyi rnam thar te/ ras bris bcu gnyis kyi ji ltar bya ba'i tshul legs par mngags pa ltar/ pir thogs dbang po sprul sku chos dbyings rgya mtshos/ dad 'dun brtson pa chen pos yang dag par bsgrubs pa mthar phyin nas/ hor gos bzang po'i gong gsham lag/ byang dar gyi zhal khebs sogs 'jig rten mtha' dag gi rgyan dang mchod pa'i rten du gyur pa yongs su rdzogs pa grub//.*

[525] *Ibid.*, p. 275.6 (138a).

[526] *Ibid.*, p. 300.1 (150b): *de nas sprul sku chos dbyings rgya mtshos gtsos byas pa'i ri mo ba mkhas 'dus kyis sngags grwa'i 'du khang gi 'debs bris dpe zla dang bral ba gangs ri'i ljongs kyi gtsug lag khang mtha' dag gi rgyan du gyur pa gegs med de legs par grub te/.* On his work in 1656, see *ibid.*, p. 302.6 (151b).

[527] *Ibid.*, pp. 409–10 (205a-b). Also according to L. S. Dagyab (1977), p. 38, Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho painted extensively in this reliquary chapel, called the "mChod-khang-gsar."

[528] Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 5.

[529] bKras dgon lo rgyus rtsom 'bri tshogs chung (1992), pp. 24–5: Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho offered a set of three genuine Indian bronzes of Amitāyus for deposit in a reliquary stūpa called the rJe-mchod-sdong-ma. This is said to have been mentioned in the 1st Paṇ-chen's autobiography, fol. 162.

[530] Cf. Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 110: *phal cher mkhyen ris dang/ sman ris gnyis su med pa zhig gi thog/ skabs re bzo khyad dpe gsar dag kyang gnang gi yod pa 'dra....*

[531] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 110, seems to indicate he had taken part, but Shakabpa's source, i.e. Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, vol. 1, p. 283 (*ka* 142a), does not actually state this.

[532] See Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 5, who refers to the chapel instead as the "Thub-dbang-don-ldan" chapel: *khong gis phyag bstar ma'i bris sku pho brang rgyal mtshan mthon po'i gzim chung ngo mtshar bkod par rje btsun blo bzang chos rgyan gyi 'dra sku dang/ ston pa'i cho 'phrul skabs kyi sdebs bris ngo mtshar can dang/ 'du khang steng thub dbang don ldan du ston pa lha babs dus chen dang/ cho 'phrul tshes brgyad skabs kyi mdzad pa rnams sdebs bris su yod pa da lta bkra shis lhun po'i dgon par mjal rgyu yod pa dang/.* M. Henss (1981), plate 79, illustrates a detail from what may be old Tashilhunpo murals by Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho. He describes this as a detail from the "temptation of the Buddha" in the grave-chapel of the 1st Dalai Lama, dating it to the end of the 15th century, but it is probably a detail of the Buddha's display of miracles on the eighth day. (See Pls. 34–39.) bKras dgon lo rgyus rtsom 'bri tshogs chung (1992), p. 47, describes the reliquary chapel above the main assembly hall, formerly called the rNam-thar-lha-khang, which was later called the "mThong ba don ldan" after its renovation in the 17th century by the 1st Paṇ-chen.
A total of twelve plates in the book People's Fine Arts Publishing House, ed. (1982), *Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals* (plates 116–127, pp. 126–137) illustrate murals depicting the Buddha's working of miracles (*cho 'phrul*) on fifteen consecutive days in the first lunar month. These murals are probably in Tashilhunpo, perhaps in the Pho-brang rGyal-mtshan-mthon-po where Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho is known to have painted. Compare the stylistically very similar minor figures in *ibid.*, p. 47, and M. Henss (1981), pl. 79. An exact attribution must remain for the future. A slightly later mural series on the same theme is found, for instance, in the Bla-brang Nyi-'od-chen-po. Most of the illustrated murals show obvious signs of age: here and there one sees flaking, large and small cracks, and both darkened and faded patches in the paint. The faces and bodies of a few central figures have been recently repainted, as have a few larger areas adjacent to the main figures.

[533] Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje *et al.* (1985), *Bod kyi thang ka*, plate 75. Such golden thangkas (*gser thang*) evidently had a long history in Tibet. Mentions of such paintings go back at least to the early 16th century. See Kun-dga'-grol-mchog, *dPal ldan bla ma 'jam pa'i dbyangs*, f. 102a.6, a passage referring to ca. the year 1526: *de 'tshams thub pa'i gser thang shin tu legs pa.*

[534] Dalai bla-ma V, *Zur thams cad mkhyen pa*, xylograph ed., p. 105.4 (*ta* 52a).

[535] A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho, MHTL no. 11248, ascribes the following written work to the master painter (*lha ris pa dbu mdzad*) Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho: *Paṇ chen chos rgyan gyi sku phreng zhal thang ljags bkod ma'i kha byang.* Cf. G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 409, who in discussing the inscriptions to the block-prints of this same series, interprets the artist as having been one dKon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan, though this is not what the inscription as he quotes it actually says. A-khu Ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho goes on to mention (MHTL no. 11248, continued) having seen a work running to some ninety folios which seems to have been a compilation of inscriptions or colophons (*sbyar byang*) to works of art such as those in the "celestial palace" (Lha-ldan gzhal-med-khang) of Lhasa: *lha ldan gzhal med khang gi sbyar byang skal bzang snang ba sogs shog grangs dgu bcu tsam mthong/.*

[536] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, vol. 1, p. 283.4 (*ka* 142a): *po ta la'i tshoms chen logs bris la .... de thog sde pa'i dgongs pa bzhin rje dge 'dun grub kyi 'khrungs rabs snga phyi rnams sprul sku chos dbyings rgya mtshos gtsos pa'i dbus gtsang gi lha bris pa mkhas mang bsdus nas bkod/.* On the ten-thangka set, see Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 284.4 (142b).

[537] See also the painting of Subhūti in the Victoria and Albert Museum, reproduced in D. Jackson (1984), p. 36; and the one reproduced in Toni Schmid (1964), p. 58. See also G. Béguin ed. (1977), p. 215, no. 254; V. Reynolds *et al.* (1986), p. 158–163; and G. Béguin (1991), pp. 92–98, for further references. Two interesting paintings from a parallel set adapted from this series (though with the figures relatively smaller and placed further apart) evidently by 18th-century Manchu court artists are in the Philadelphia Museum of Art and were published in C. Trungpa (1975), pp. 81 and 83, who curiously enough described them as "Kadam School, 17th century." A whole album of still more heavily sinicized pictures deriving ultimately from this same set (from the collection of Prof. Werner Schulemann in Bonn) are reproduced and described in Toni Schmid (1964). Several paintings based on the set of xylographs were discussed by J. Huntington (1968), pp. 122ff.

[538] G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, pp. 410–412, describing paintings no. 53 and 54 (plate L, 87).

[539] Cf. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 412, who opined: "They must be assigned to the schools of painting developed after K'ang-hsi had definitely included Tibet in his dominions. The style so clearly Chinese might suggest K'ams schools and painters who had lived under the direct influence of

Chinese artists; however, after Chinese hegemony had firmly taken roots in Tibet, the Chinese manner ruled supreme and gave fresh vigour to drooping Tibetan tradition, not only in K'ams but also in the great monasteries of the Yellow Sect. This happened particularly in Tashilhunpo or in Lhasa, where political needs made exchanges between Chinese and Tibetan culture more frequent and fruitful." These hypotheses must now be revised.

[540] V. Reynolds, A. Heller and J. Gyatso (1986), p. 160, rightly state: "Questions remain for the paintings associated with the wood-block set, such as: which are derived directly from the set (even printed from the blocks)?; are the paintings necessarily dated concurrently with or later than the woodblocks? Another painting of Sakya Pandita, in the Musée Guimet, follows the woodblock print more closely." They then refer to Musée Guimet no. MG 16502, published in J. Hackin *et al.*, *Asiatic Mythology* (London: 1932), p. 173, fig. 38. See also now G. Béguin (1991), p. 77, no. 31.

[541] Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 414, quoted but then mistranslated the last verse on the twelfth block: *de ltar skyes rabs nyi ma*['*i*] *grangs ldan pa'i// snang brnyan par du slob 'khor phyi tshogs kyis// dad pas bsgrubs pa'i dge tshogs gangga'i rgyun// kun kyang rjes su 'dzin pa'i rgyur gyur cig//.* This can be translated: "May this entire Ganges current of merit faithfully achieved by his outer circle of disciples through carving in this way these pictures of the twelve life stories [of the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che] become the cause for receiving his grace!"

[542] For a still later depiction (from the mid 18th to mid 19th c.?) of the 1st Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che surrounded by four of his earlier existences, see V. Reynolds *et al.* (1986), p. 161, P15. Here too the overall composition has become quite crowded, and it incorporates in almost all details the by now standard depictions of the earlier lives of the Paṇ-chen. For a painting of the same lineage down to the 4th Paṇ-chen, Blo-bzang-bstan-pa'i-nyi-ma (1782–1853), in a ca. mid-19th-century gTsang-bris style, see Rhie and Thurman (1991), p. 274, no. 99.

[543] Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 5.

[544] See for example V. Reynolds *et al.*, (1986), p. 26, and Rhie and Thurman (1991), p. 61, probably deriving ultimately from Smith (1970), p. 46.

[545] This gTsang-bris style is said to be distinguishable in some paintings through the darker skies and the greater proclivity to depict snow-capped peaks on the horizon of the landscapes. It was also more apt to use asymmetrical compositions for ordinary thangkas, in contrast with the modern dBus-ris which favored symmetry as much as possible (i.e. when not following an established asymmetrical model).

[546] This was the opinion for example of Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes, painting master at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala.

[547] This was, I suspect, a simplified version of the Central Tibetan style cultivated by the artists of E district. As yet I do not have much additional proof for this, but Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 107, and one or two other references also provide hints to this effect. See also below, Chapter 13, on the style of E or g.Ye district. This was also the opinion of the contemporary thangka painter Ngag-dbang-bzang-po (b. 1952, Phag-ri), Bodhnath, March 1995, that the fine court style of the sDe-srid's court (as published in *Bod kyi thang ka*) resembles more the "New sMan-ris" (i.e. a refined gTsang-bris) than the typical dBus-bris or Lha-sa-bris of modern times.

[548] For two typical examples of the recent dBus-bris see Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje *et al.*, *Bod kyi thang ka*, plates 27 and 51.

[549] *Ri mo mkhan*, p. 144f. (verses 13–15).

[550] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 284.4: *phun rab gzhis kar sman gsar ba chos dbyings rgya mtsho'i phyag bris gong sa rgyal ba'i 'khrungs rabs sman gsar shin tu spus dag bcu sogs mjal.* As noted above, he first composed depictions of this series at Lhasa in 1648. See Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de*, vol. 1, p. 283.4 (*ka* 142a). Cf. also The Palace Museum (1992), plates 2 through 7, each with the main figure in partial relief facing a famous temple or monastery. (Plates 8 and especially 9 are probably later additions to the earlier series, judging from the compositions, though the complete set as actually painted here probably dates to the mid 1700s.) Could these too go back ultimately to originals composed by him? In a few ways they are reminiscent; compare for example plate 6, which shows the supplicating patron (Gushri Khan?) kneeling in the bottom right corner below bSod-nams-rgya-mtsho, with the similar figure in plate 7.

[551] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 182.3: *rtser bla ma lha khang na dbu mdzad chos dbyings rgya mtsho'i phyag bris kyi grub chen brgyad bcu 'gran bral/.*

Chapter 9

Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje, the 10th Zhwa-nag Karma-pa

No history of important Tibetan artists would be complete without an account of the 10th Karma-pa, Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje (1604–1674). He was not only the greatest painter among the Karma-pa incarnations but also one of the most versatile and idiosyncratic artists in Tibetan history.

Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje's life saw many ups and downs.[552] Born in the eastern nomadic region of 'Go-log, he was controlled and manipulated throughout his childhood and youth by several greedy lamas, including a pair of dubious characters called Lcags-mo-ba and Yang-ri-ba (Yang-ri drung-pa). Later as an adult he witnessed the almost complete eclipse of his tradition, including the overthrow of his main patron, the gTsang-pa king, the confiscation of all Karma-pa monasteries in central Tibet (which was later rescinded in part) and the utter destruction of the great Karma-pa encampment by the armies of the sKyid-shod-pa nobles and the Mongols.[553] He barely managed to escape from the last disaster with his life, fleeing on foot eastward to southeastern Khams accompanied only by his ever-faithful personal attendant, rim-gro-pa Kun-tu-bzang-po.[554]

Evidently later in life he did not strictly follow the vows of a monk; he is said to have dressed and lived as a layman, a fact which did not endear him to some of his contemporary critics.[555] He was no great scholar either, but he did possess a very compassionate and generous nature. He was also an accomplished artist and poet. At one point during his many years of exile in the Chinese borderland he was invited to rGyal-rong by the Tsha-kho rgyal-po, and on his way he spent the lunar New Year of the dragon year (1652?) at 'Bo Gangs-dkar in Mi-nyag. At that time he said: "There will not be anyone better than me in Tibet in the arts of poetry and painting. I am a person who gladdens Avalokiteśvara. I have come into this world to paint paintings."[556] Creating art works was one of the chief religious activities he cultivated throughout the many vicissitudes of his life. It would seem that making works of sacred art brought him pleasure and even solace.

Early Practice of Religious Art

Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje began the study of painting and embroidery (*si'u 'drub pa*) when very young, and by his eighth year he was already producing many paintings and sculptures.[557] This precocious ability was said to have been predicted by dBang-phyug-rdo-rje, his previous embodiment. As mentioned above, that 9th Karma-pa's skills as a painter had not been particularly dazzling. Once he had even been teased about it by the sprul-sku Phan-bde and some of the other court artists, and at that time he had retorted that soon he would put all other artists to shame.[558]

Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje's first formal painting teacher was one sprul-sku Tshe-ring from Lho-brag Chu-'khyer. From him he learned the sMan-ris style, which according to Kong-sprul became the stylistic basis for the paintings he executed during the earlier part of his life. Later on, Chos-

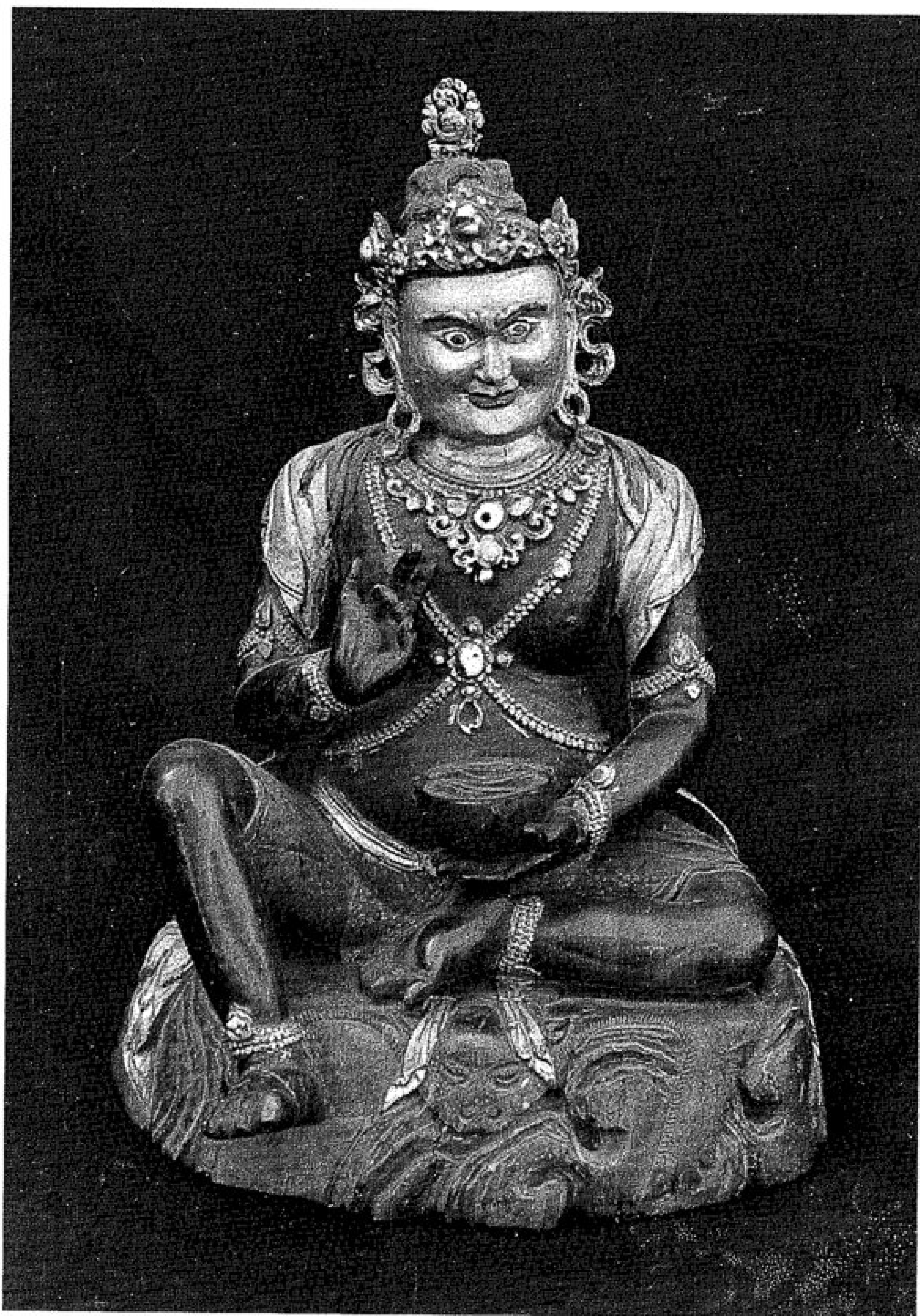


Fig. 127. The Siddha Nāropa. Sculpture, rhino tusk, attributed to the 10th Karma-pa, preserved in Rumtek. Photograph courtesy of Nik Douglas. Published: N. Douglas & M. White, Karmapa: The Black Hat Lama of Tibet (London. Lucas & Co., 1976).

dbyings-rdo-rje incorporated both Chinese and Kashmiri influences into his art: Kong-sprul specifies that in the later half of his life Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje imitated Chinese silk scroll paintings (*si thang*) and Kashmiri traditions of art (*kha che'i bzo rgyun*), and in this way produced not only paintings and statues, but also Chinese-style embroidered (or sewn) thangkas (*si thang phyag drubs*).[559] His biography records, however, that Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje even as a youth had developed a special interest in and appreciation for Kashmiri cast metal images (*kha che'i li ma*).[560] Be that as it may, according to the 18th-century account of the Karma-pa bDud-'dul-rdo-rje, a characteristic feature of Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje's own style was his drawing of the figures after the fashion of Kashmiri statues.[561] Here one should recall the similar influences of Indian (i.e. Pāla-style) metal images ascribed to Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis, the founder of the sGar-bris.

That Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje also derived direct inspiration from various Chinese paintings is recorded elsewhere. He is said to have painted, for example, twenty-three thangkas while taking as his model the Yer-pa rwa-ba-ma, the famous set of Chinese silk scroll paintings reputed to have been some of the oldest such images in Tibet.[562] At mTshur-phu there survived a twenty-three-thangka set depicting pairs of the Sixteen Elders modelled after the Yer-pa rwa-ba-ma which he



Fig. 128. Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje, the 10th Karma-pa. Drawing. A modern redrawing of a Kar-shod-pa composition, after Karma Thinley (1980), p. 102.

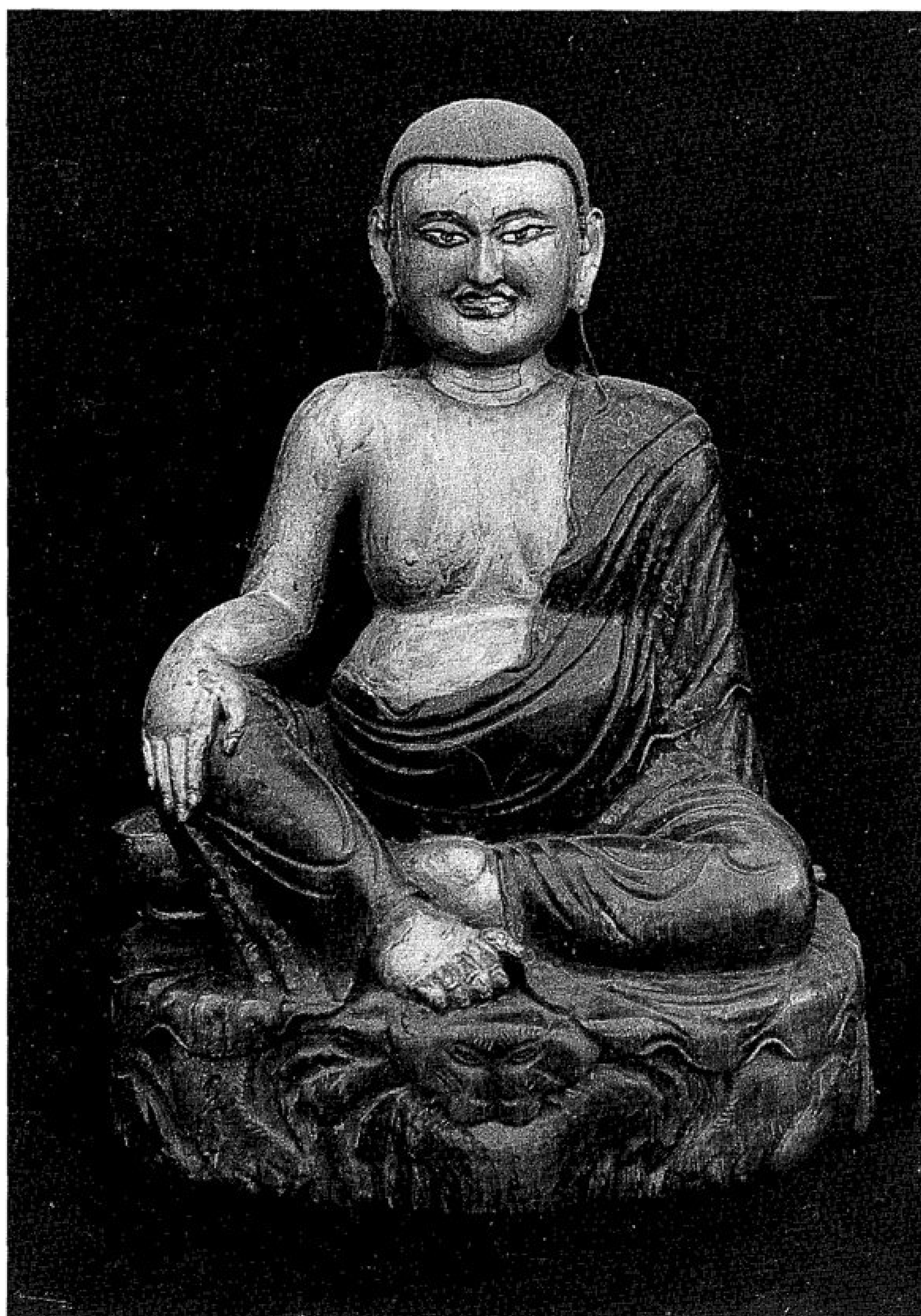


Fig. 129. rJe-btsun Mi-la Ras-pa. Sculpture, rhino tusk, attributed to the 10th Karma-pa, preserved in Rumtek. Photograph courtesy of Nik Douglas. Published in N. Douglas & M. White (1976).

had painted on a white support with old Chinese stone pigments.[563] On other occasions he is said to have copied a Chinese painting of Avalokiteśvara (sPyan-ras-gzigs Sems-nyid-ngal-gso) or a painting—probably in a Chinese style—depicting the Sixteen Elders visiting sNar-thang for their noonday meal at the invitation of mChims Nam-mkha'-grags (1210–1285).[564] During his long exile in 'Jang-yul in or near the Chinese border district of Likiang, Yunnan, Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje reportedly produced paintings in a distinctive Chinese manner.[565] A ten-thangka set depicting the Twelve Great Deeds of the Buddha in a Chinese style (*mdzad bcu rgya bris ma*), survived at mTshur-phu in the personal chambers of the Karma-pa.[566]

From his childhood until his death, Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje seems to have kept up a fairly steady production of sacred art objects. Some he offered to his teachers in gratitude for religious teachings received,[567] and others he bestowed upon his disciples.[568] Still others he dedicated to the fulfillment of his deceased teachers' wishes.[569] He also experimented with many different materials and media. Carvings from white sandalwood[570] and rhino tusk[571] are attributed to him (some of which survive in Rumtek), as are images and objects cast from metal alloys[572] and even of porcelain.[573] One finds mentioned even a painting of the guardians of the directions (*lokapālas*) that he did on a *ya-sha* silk (*gos ya sha*, i.e. satin?)

support using the blood from his own nosebleed in combination with gold outlines.[574] A number of his paintings were deposited as holy objects in the reliquary stūpa of the 12th Karma-pa Byang-chub-rdo-rje, including a thangka of Cakrasamvara with a figure of the 10th Karma-pa himself among the minor figures portrayed (*lha mgron*).[575] The inventory of the contents of Si-tu Paṇ-chen's memorial stūpa similarly records the existence of other paintings, including depictions of Vajrapāṇi, Avalokiteśvara, the Sixteen Elders and the Buddhas of the Three Times.[576]



Fig. 130. Āryadeva and Nāgārjuna. A painting belonging to the former ruling house of Sikkim and deriving from a set designed by Si-tu Paṇ-chen. After rGyan drug mchog gnyis (Gangtok, Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, 1962), pl. 2.

Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje's Styles

His place in the development of painting styles is at first sight a little unclear given the fact that he is said to have painted at different times in at least three styles: the sMan-ris, the sGar-bris, and a strongly Chinese style. Though his initial training had been in the sMan-ris, later he consciously imitated other artistic traditions. The brief but important account on Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje's styles in the *Shes bya kun khyab* of Kong-sprul depicts his later paintings as having been the products of direct imitation of Chinese models.[577] The more recent scholar W. D. Shakabpa considered certain (later?) works of Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje to have belonged to the sGar-bris style. He described, apparently from memory, a pair of small thangkas with inscriptions by Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje, preserved at Lho-brag Nyi-lde-dgon monastery, that portrayed Mi-la ras-pa and the "Five Sisters of Long Life" (*tshe ring mched lnga*).[578] These paintings had in his opinion the following characteristics: a great amount of empty space, many landscape features such as mountains and forests, finely detailed gold work, and a predominance of green and pale shades in the overall color scheme, which allows the style to be differentiated from the sMan-ris at a single glance.[579] According to Shakabpa, these features also typified the sGar-bris style in general. (The latter speculated that Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje had founded the sGar-bris, and he considered a later Si-tu influenced style of the 18th or 19th century to represent this same style, citing as a typical exam-

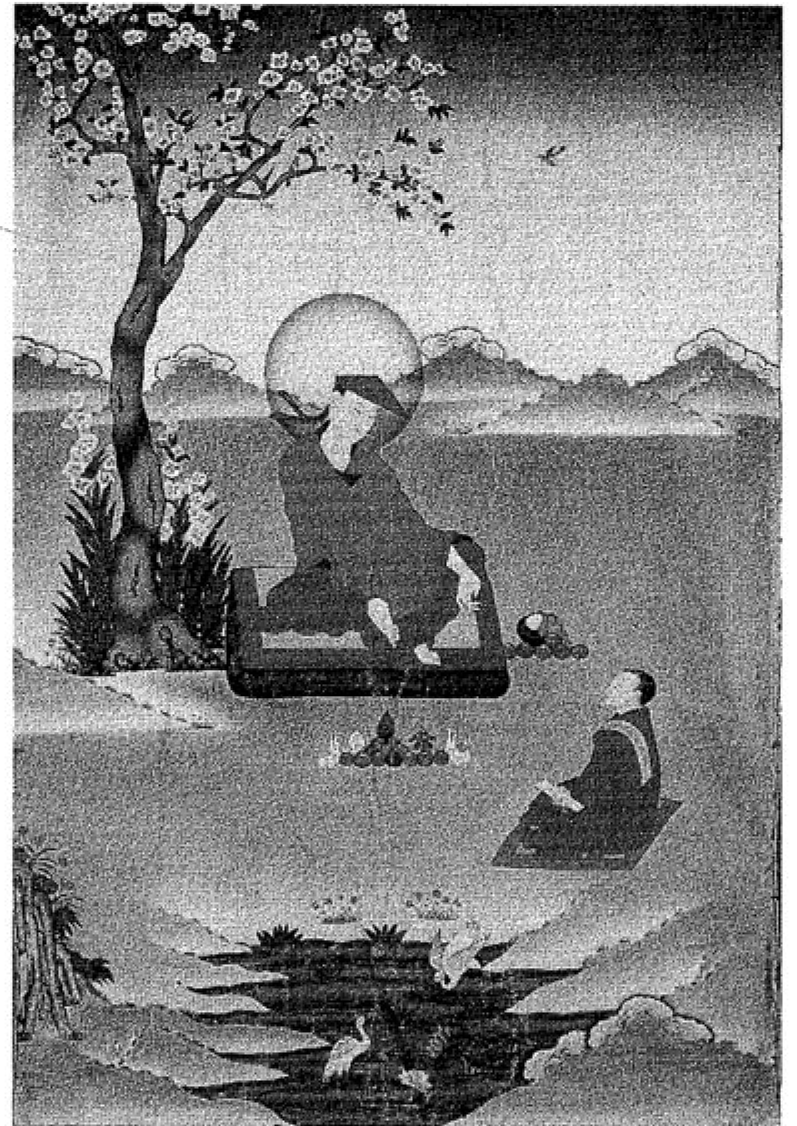


Fig. 131. Āryadeva. After B. C. Olschak with Geshe Thubten Wangyal, Mystic Art of Ancient Tibet (N. Y., 1973), p. 90.



Fig. 132. Asaṅga and Vasubandhu. A painting belonging to the former ruling house of Sikkim and designed by Si-tu Paṇ-chen. After rGyan drug mchog gnyis (Gangtok, Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, 1962), pl. 3.



Fig. 133. Asaṅga and Vasubandhu. After Charles Bell, The Religions of Tibet (Oxford, 1931), illustration facing p. 50.

ple the Eighty-four Mahāsiddhas set belonging to the dPa'-bo sprul-sku that had been shown in the Tibet House in New Delhi.) (See Pl. 56, Fig. 137.)

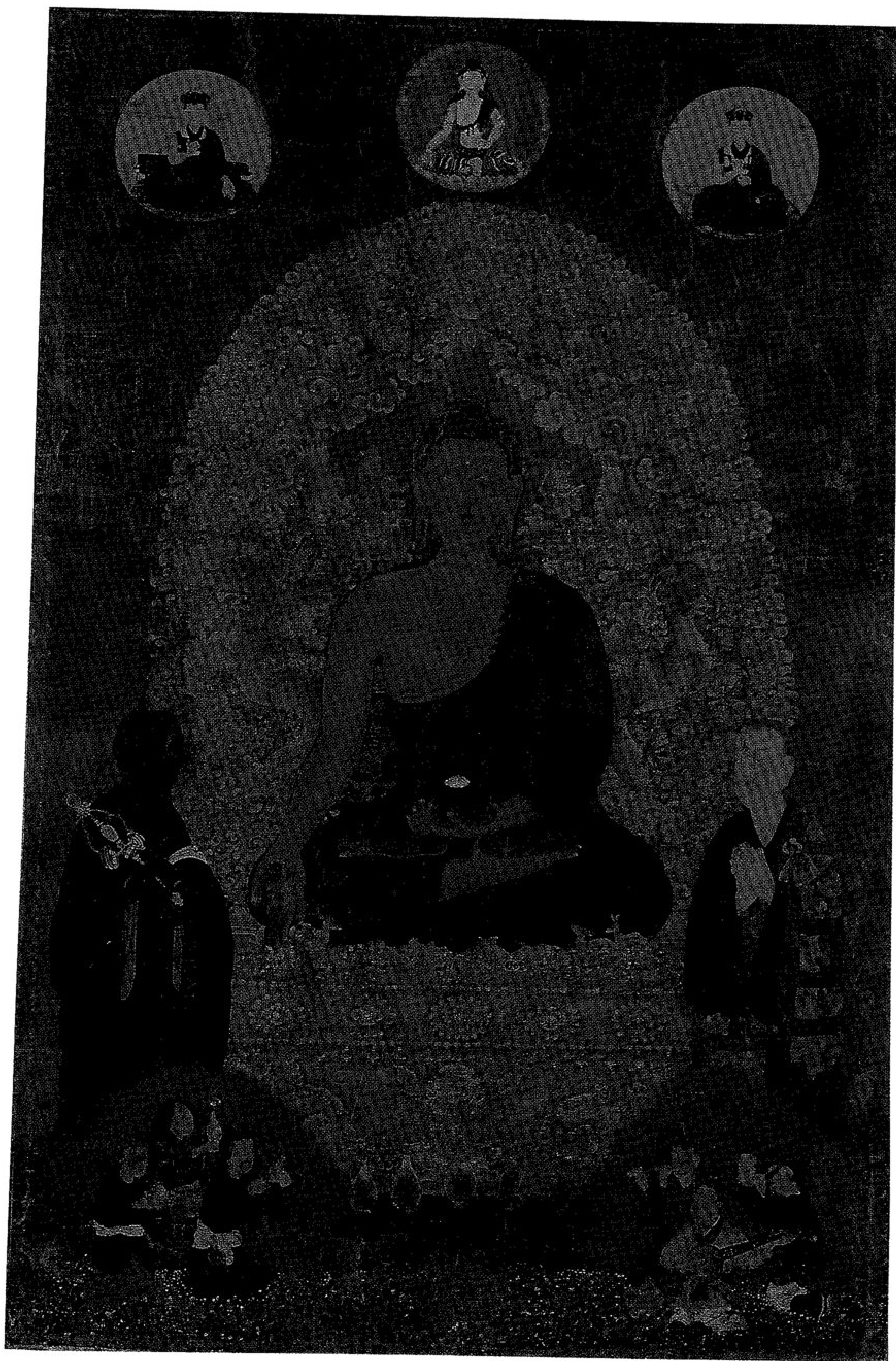
A set of paintings attributed to him by one later tradition do indeed resemble a heavily sinicized sGar-bris style—one could even classify them as "Chinese-style" (*rgya ris*). Five such paintings were preserved in Gangtok at least until the 1960s in the possession of the successive rulers of Sikkim. Color reproductions of these were published from the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology in the book entitled *rGyan drug mchog gnyis* (1962).[580] The introduction, p. 5, actually states:

> These thankas have, for some generations, been heirlooms of the Namgyal family and were painted by the sixth [*sic*] in the line of the Gyalwa Karmapa incarnation, that is, in the middle of the Seventeenth Century."

Here no doubt it was the 10th Karma-pa—who flourished in the middle of the seventeenth century—who was meant, and not the 6th.[581]

But a later mention of this set in a publication from the same institute abandons this attribution and asserts instead that these paintings were produced by a subsequent master.[582] The most knowledgeable Karma bKa'-brgyud-pa lamas also do not consider either attribution—to the 6th or 10th Karma-pa—to be accurate. These paintings would seem instead to go back to a well-known set of paintings designed by Si-tu Paṇ-chen in the following century.[583] That the set conforms to a composition type that had by this century become widely followed and well established is attested by other surviving paintings. A similar set of paintings was photographed by Rahula Sankrityayana in Tibet in the 1930s.[584] The same pair of the masters Asaṅga and Vasubandhu (plate 3, facing p. 14) is found in a slightly more Tibetanized but still almost identical depiction in Sir Charles Bell's *The Religion of Tibet*.[585] Similarly, one of the masters is portrayed almost identically as a single figure in another surviving thangka.[586]

Another painting provisionally linked to Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje is found in a private collection. The authors of the published catalogue to the collection assert that this painting bears the "artistic signature" of Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje, though here, too, there is no inscriptional or other conclu-



Pl. 47. Buddha Śākyamuni. Possibly the work of the 10th Karma-pa Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje. Thangka, mid 17th c., Eastern Tibet, 68 x 44 cm. Collection A. B.

sive evidence.[587] The thangka (Pl. 59) portrays Padmasambhava on a yellow silk ground with a very simple background. If the attribution is accurate, then another stylistically very similar painting in the collection can be said to bear the same "artistic signature." This is a much larger and considerably better preserved painting, also on a golden-yellow background, showing as its main figure an important Karma bka'-brgyud-pa lama (Pl. 60). Though the latter figure has previously been identified as the 6th Zhwa-dmar Gar-dbang Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug (1584–1630),[588] in fact he seems to be the Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas, which would necessitate a dating to the 18th century at the earliest.[589]

One of the few paintings available to me that in some ways matches the traditional descriptions of works by the 10th Karma-pa is a striking thangka of Buddha Śākyamuni on gold-colored silk, also in a private collection.[590] The three small figures above the main figure are: sPyan-ras-gzigs Sems-nyid-ngal-gso at top center, and below him, to the right and left, respectively, a black-hat and red-hat Karma-pa (the latter holding a mālā), all in a fairly normal Tibetan style. But otherwise this painting from the Karma bKa'-brgyud-pa tradition is unusual, suggesting an origin in China. Immediately to the right and left of the main figure, Buddha Śākyamuni in Chinese style, stand two attendants obviously copied from Chinese models. The backrest of the main figure abounds in surprising and sometimes fantastic animal details (note, for instance, the rabbits near the hand of the Buddha) and archaic iconographical elements. The sea of jewels painted in the foreground is a display of both religious devotion and artistic whimsy.

A second painting on gold-colored silk depicts rJe-btsun Mi-la ras-pa before a cave in the rocky mountainside. Nestled next to him to his right, a deer has taken refuge, while a hunter and his dog sit respectfully and peacefully close by to the left. In the foreground left, four birds peck and hop about. High above, slightly off center to the right, a black-hat Karma-pa is seated—all this on an otherwise empty gold silk background. Though this painting is much simpler and there are no archaic Chinese elements as in the first painting, there are strong similarities indicating the same style and even the same hand, such as in the portrayal of faces. (See plates 47 and 48.)

One could probably be forgiven for suspecting the hand of the 10th Karma-pa in these eccentric yet wonderful paintings. Tradition asserts that Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje commonly copied Chinese models, as in the first case. He is also said often to have used golden silk for his painting supports, and this is what we have in both paintings. A pre-18th century dating is also not excluded by the fact that other later sGar-bris stylistic features associated with Si-tu and the Kar-shod-pa are completely absent here.

Without other evidence, however, an attribution of these to the 10th Karma-pa would remain highly conjectural. But the discovery by Heather Stoddard of an inscribed painting tends to confirm the above guess.[591] The latter thangka shows the oracle and protective deity rgyal-po Pe-har in the manifestation Shing-bya-can, and it contains an inscription in golden letters in a prominent though unusual position: in the dark sky at the top left. The inscription states:

> This painting by the Venerable Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje, an image of the great long-haired one (*ral can skyes bu chen po*) who punishes enemies of the [Buddhist] Doctrine and eradicates evil, was made in the sheep year [1655?] in the place mGu-ru-shar-la of Mi-nyag, in accordance with the request of his intimate disciple Kun-tu-bzang-po.

The employment of honorifics in the inscription gives the impression that neither the artist nor the patron wrote it.

The theme of this third painting is very different, the sole figure being a wrathful deity in a dark and tumultuous setting, and one must look a little harder for stylistic similarities. Still, all three thangkas have some points in common. For instance, one finds animals as important minor elements in all the compositions. They have been treated realistically, with obvious tenderness and not without a touch of playfulness or whimsy.[592] Sometimes the animals or other figures are half hidden in unexpected locations to create surprise. No ordinary landscape can be recognized in any of the backgrounds; the main elements in the foreground arise out of an undifferentiated empty



Pl. 48. Mi-la Ras-pa. Possibly the work of the 10th Karma-pa Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje. Thangka on silk, mid 17th c., Eastern Tibet, 47.5 x 34.5 cm. Collection A. B.

space. The application of color has been done almost in a Chinese brush-painting style—outlining plays a less important role in defining the outer edges of forms. In places the artist had created subtle effects by depicting details with pale creamy colors over a slightly darker base coat of the same color, as with the animal elements in the pale green (jade?) backdrop behind the Buddha, and the pale wavelets projecting out from the red sea of blood in the Pe-har thangka.

Probably in the future it will be possible to identify, with the help of inscriptions, still more paintings attributable to Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje.[593] But we should also not forget that Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje worked in more than one style.

One question that has yet to be answered is to what extent Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje during the course of his life had come into direct contact with the then-flourishing tradition of sGar-bris painters. Why, for example, had he not learned the mainstream sGar-bris style from the beginning? He must have been well aware of the works of Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis and his successors.[594] He must also have known the iconometry manual *Nyi ma chen po'i me long* composed by his own predecessor, the 8th Karma-pa.[595] The versified biography of this highly sympathetic master by gTsang mkhan-chen dPal-ldan-rgya-mtsho (1610–1684) does not throw much light on these matters.[596]

Notes

[552] On his life see H. E. Richardson (1987) and Karma Thinley (1980), pp. 103–106.

[553] gTsang mkhan-chen dPal-ldan-rgya-mtsho, p. 178.3, writes that Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje refused to call up the military forces of Kong-po when the gTsang king was defeated, not wanting to be blamed for the destruction of the great dGe-lugs-pa monasteries Se-ra and 'Bras-spungs.

[554] See also gTsang mkhan-chen dPal-ldan-rgya-mtsho, pp. 179f. and 186.4, and Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 349.

[555] Dalai bla-ma V, *Za hor gyi ban de* (1989–1991), vol. 2, p. 156, reports that (in ca. 1669) in connection with the death of the treasurer (*phyag mdzod*) of the drung-pa of mTshur-phu, some had averred that the Karma-pa had several sons in 'Jang-yul (Likiang, Yunnan). In the same work, pp. 359–60, the Dalai Lama repeats the report that the 10th Karma-pa had long hair, was wearing upper-Hor garments, and was going around with a wife and children in tow. The 5th Dalai Lama declares, however, (see pp. 360–61) that he personally had not lost his faith in the Karma-pa. It is ironic that the next Dalai Lama, Tshangs-dbyangs-rgya-mtsho, was also a long-haired layman who (perhaps not entirely coincidentally) had also been ruthlessly manipulated in his childhood and youth by questionable monastics or lamas.

[556] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 111, quoting Si-tu and 'Be-lo, f. 184a.7: *rgyal rong tsha ko rgyal pos gdan drangs/ 'bo gangs dkar du 'brug lo'i lo gsar gnang/ skabs der rje 'dis snyan ngag dang/ ri mo'i 'bri ba ni bod yul du kho bo las lhag pa mi yong/ kho bo spyan ras gzigs dgyes pa'i mi zhig yin/ 'dzam bu'i gling 'dir ri mo bri bar 'ongs pa yin rab 'byams nor bu zla ba chu shel 'phreng ba* 184a.7 *gsungs pa sogs*.

[557] Karma-nges-don-bstan-rgyas, p. 418.

[558] *Ibid.*, p. 412. This passage was mentioned by E. G. Smith (1970), p. 49, n. 88.

[559] Kong-sprul, pt. 1, p. 573.1 (*oṃ* 209b): *karma pa chos dbyings rdo rje'i zhal snga nas sman lugs pa lho brag chus khyer sprul sku tshe ring las ri mo gsan te sku tshe'i stod du sman lugs sor bzhag dang/ smad nas si thang dang kha che'i bzo rgyun bzhin mdzad de bris 'bur gnyis/ si thang phyag drubs dang bcas pa da lta mngon du mjal ba 'di rnams dang/* . The last phrase indicates that Kong-sprul had directly seen (*da lta mngon du mjal ba*) a number of such paintings and artworks.

[560] Karma-nges-don-bstan-rgyas, pp. 424–5. This passage was first mentioned by E. G. Smith (1970), p. 50, n. 90.

[561] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 50, n. 90, quotes bDud-'dul-rdo-rje as follows: *rje btsun bcu pa'i phyag bris kha che'i li// nyams 'gyur ngo mtshar zla bral chen po'o//*. Should we read *phyag bzo* instead of *phyag bris*?

[562] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 111. On this famous set of paintings, see also above in connection with Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis and note 375.

[563] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 109.3: *chos dbyings rgya mtsho'i phyag bris yer pa rwa ba ma'i gnas brtan nyis phrugs dkar por rgya yi rdo tshon rnying pas bris pa'i dpe bcad pa dgon che sde dge'i thang rnying spom kha dge bshes la yod pa de'i ma dpe nyer gsum*. Here Kaḥ-thog Si-tu adds that later these paintings were taken as the model for a similar set subsequently kept in Derge by the sPom-kha dge-bshes.

[564] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 111: *bod yul du si thang las snga ba klu mes kyi thugs dam rten yer pa rwa ba mar grags pa'i gnas bcu'i bris thang dang/ si'u spyan ras gzigs sems nyid ngal gso'i sku thang/ snar thang du mchims nam mkha'*

grags kyis 'phags pa'i gnas brtan bcu drug gdugs tshod du spyan drangs pa'i lugs kyi gnas bcu sogs la dpe mdzad de bris thang shin tu mang po phyag bris mdzad pa dang/. Note that Shakabpa here called the Yer-pa rwa-ba-ma the oldest si-thang painting in Tibet.

[565] *Ibid.*: *rgya nag dang nye ba'i 'jang yul sogs su yun ring bzhugs te rgya bris dang nye ba'i ri mo'i bris srol mdzad pa'i lo rgyus dang/.* dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 11, states that the 10th Karma-pa founded the tradition of "Chinese-style thangkas" (*rgya bris thang ka*) while in 'Jang-yul. He is also said to have founded thirteen monasteries there. Mr. Ian Alsop informed me (London, June 1994) that he has seen and photographed murals in 'Jang-yul, some possibly dateable to the time of Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje's sojourn there.

[566] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 95.5 (48a): *karma pa'i gzims khang du chos dbyings rdo rje'i phyag bris mdzad bcu rgya bris ma thang ka bcu.*

[567] Karma-nges-don-bstan-rgyas, p. 430.

[568] *Ibid.*, p. 426. In rTsa-ri, he is said to have given a painting of Avalokiteśvara to every disciple who promised to recite one hundred million maṇi mantras during their lifetime.

[569] *Ibid.*, p. 434. He painted a number of thangkas as a sort of funeral observance to commemorate the passing (*dgongs rdzogs*) of the Zhwa-dmar who died in 1630.

[570] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu mentions, pp. 17.2 (9a) figures of Sthavira[s?] and a mountain at Karma-dgon, in the sGo-dmar-khang; 107.3 (54a), at mTshur-phu, figures of the Zung-'jug teacher lineage about one span (*mtho*) tall, with throne and backdrop; and 112.3 (56b), also at mTshur-phu, a figure of Mi-la in the rTsa-ris-ma cave.

[571] *Ibid.*, p. 108.4 (54b), mentions one at mTshur-phu, in the gzims-chung mgon-khang (protector's chapel of the Karma-pa's private residence), Ma-mgon mgar-ba. Carvings attributed to the 10th Karma-pa have been reproduced in N. Douglas and M. White (1976), pp. 2, 4, 10, 14 and 18. See also *ibid.*, p. 131, nos. 22–26.

[572] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 116.4 (58b), mentions a ritual dagger made of mixed iron and bronze, and on p. 118.6 (59b), a cast image of Vajrapāṇi of excellent "dzhe kṣim" metal: *karma pa chos dbyings rdo rje'i phyag blugs dze kṣiṃ rgyu bzang phyag rdor phyag g.yas khra* [60a] *thogs shing ba steng bzhugs pa.* Both sacred objects were in mTshur-phu, and were counted as "inner sacred objects" (*nang rten*) of the temple. See also Douglas and White (1976), p. 131, no. 27; and p. 133, nos. 48 and 49. On *dzhe kṣim* and *zi khyim*, see E. Lo Bue (1981a), pp. 41ff.

[573] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 120.1 (60b), mentions at mTshur-phu a black cast porcelain image of Pha-dam-pa Sangs-rgyas: *dgon gyi gzim khang nas karma pa chos dbyings rdo rjes dkar yol la blugs pa dam pa rgya gar nag po.*

[574] *Ibid.*, p. 22.2 (11b): *karma pa chos dbyings rdo rjes shangs khrag gis gos ya sha la phyag bris gser bcad gnang ba'i zhing skyong 'khor bcas.* On similar paintings that used the blood of a nosebleed, see also *ibid.*, pp. 285.2 (143a) and 323.2 (162a). The first was reputedly a thangka painted by the artist sKal-ldan Yar-lung sprul-sku from the nosebleed of Gu-ru Chos-dbang (1212–1270), and the second was from the nosebleed of Mar-pa.

[575] Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *'Jig rten dbang phyug*, p. 196 (*nya* 8b): *rgyal dbang bcu pa'i phyag ris bde mchog gi thang lha mgron la rje nyid kyi sku yod pa/ rigs lnga yab yum gyi thang sku/ yang rje bcu pa'i bka' rtsom phyag bris kyi thang gzugs/ rnam 'joms kyi zhal thang/ rgyal ba'i dbang po de nyid kyi phyag bris 'od dpag med gtso 'khor gsum yod pa'i zhal thang/* . The stūpa was constructed according to the proportions prescribed in Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje's *Nyi ma chen po'i me long*. Later, on p. 302.4, there is also mention of the expert Newar artisans who contributed to the project: *de* [=*ne*] *pā la'i yul gyi rig byed pa mkhas pa dag gis....*

[576] 'Be-lo Tshe-dbang-kun-khyab in his *Byams mgon*, p. 713 (15a): *rje chos dbyings rdo rje'i phyag bris phyag rdor dang spyan ras gzigs kyi sku thang/ .... rje chos dbyings rdo rje'i phyag bris gnas bcu dang dus gsum sangs rgyas kyi sku thang rnams dang/.*

[577] Kong-sprul, pt. 1, p. 573.2 (*oṃ* 209b).

[578] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, pp. 111f. Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 332.1, described seeing five thangkas by Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje at Nyi-lde-dgon in Lho-brag. But he only mentioned the main figure of one as a "dPa'-bo": *chos dbyings rdo rje'i phyag bris dpa' bo sogs zhal thang lnga.* Possibly the thangka painting of Mar-pa, Mi-la and Dwags-po also at Nyi-sde-dgon mentioned on p. 333.7 as by "the Karma-pa" actually referred to a work of the 10th Karma-pa.

[579] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, pp. 111f.: *chos dbyings rdo rje'i phyag bris mtshan byang 'khod pa'i mi la bzhad pa rdo rje dang/ tshe ring* [p. 112] *mched lnga'i zhal thang bris rnying chung ngu gnyis lho brag nyi lde dgon gyi nang rten du bzhugs pa de dang/ ... de tshor sa stong che zhing/ yul ljongs dang/ nags tshal sogs mang la/ gser bris zhib tshags che ba dang/ tshon phal che ljang dang/ skya shas che bas mjal tsam nyid nas sman lugs dang dbye ba lam seng 'byed thub pa zhig yod/.*

[580] Namgyal Institute of Tibetology (1962), *rGyan drug mchog gnyis.*

[581] According to E. G. Smith (1970), p. 50, n. 90, they were painted in 1670, four years before that Karma-pa's death, though I do not know on what authority he asserted this. Smith described these works as seeming "to represent a modified Karma Gardri style."

[582] N. C. Sinha (1989), p. 59, stated: "The thangka, loaned to the SRIT [Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology] for six months in 1961, was painted in the middle of the 18th century by the famous Kargyu scholar cum artist Situ Rinpoche." Cf. Essen and Thingo (1989), vol. 2, p. 85, re: no. II 181, who accept the attribution of the set to the 10th Karma-pa.

[583] Thrangu Rinpoche, Bodhnath, March 1995. The latter added that paintings by Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje are not known to survive outside of Tibet, but sculptures, e.g. one cast image of Tārā, do survive. Tenga Rinpoche, Swayambhunath, March 1995, similarly did not know of any accessible paintings by the 10th Karma-pa. However, many cast-metal images and other sculpted figures survived, such as at 'Ben-chen dgon-pa. In the stūpa of the previous Sangs-rgyas-gnyan-pa, a silver Mi-bskyod-pa (Akṣobhya Buddha) was placed. By contrast, many *thangkas* by Si-tu Paṇ-chen are said to survive.

[584] S. K. Pathak, ed. (1986), plates 50–53, reproduced prints from a set that Rahula Sankrityayana had filmed in central Tibet—probably in gTsang. (One previously unpublished but related painting includes a Tibetan lama—see ibid., plate 54.) These paintings are actually more elegant than those reproduced in Sikkim, and they are presumably more faithful copies of Si-tu's originals.

[585] Charles Bell (1931), *The Religion of Tibet*, illustration facing p. 50

[586] B. C. Olschak and Geshe Thubten Wangyal (1973), p. 90.

[587] G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 108, plate I 64.

[588] See *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 142: no. I 85 (=II 246).

[589] The painting (Pl. 60) will be discussed in more detail below in connection with Si-tu Paṇ-chen.

[590] Collection A.B. Sold by the Galerie Koller Zürich, ca. 1993, as "China, 15th c."

[591] I am grateful to Heather Stoddard for showing me a photograph of this thangka and also the draft of her forthcoming article, "Two Rare Tibetan Thangkas and the Tenth Black Hat Karmapa as an Artist" (to appear in the *Tibet Journal*).

[592] dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), pp. 111–112, similarly mentions that his teacher Thang-bla-tshe-dbang told him that the 10th Karma-pa's paintings which he had seen were like Chinese art, and that the various living creatures, game animals and birds they contained were so realistic that they could have been mistaken for the real thing.

[593] Heather Stoddard has told me of yet another thangka, stylistically similar to the third one, this one in the textiles department of the Cleveland Museum of Fine Arts. It shows a kneeling black figure holding a vajra, tentatively identified by Stoddard as a minister in the court of Pe-har. The textile frame features two figures of garuḍas in silk appliqué. Because of the archaic appearance of the textile mounting, the painting has previously been attributed to the Mongol period.

[594] Could this have been due to the fact that during his early life he was kept under the control of the two dubious characters lCags-mo-ba and Yang-ri drung-pa, and not in the circle of the Zhwa-dmar?

[595] Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs (1985), p. 85, mentions another iconometry treatise, the *rNam 'grel nyi ma'i 'od zer*, which was apparently a commentary written by the 10th Karma-pa or one of his main disciples.

[596] Smith (1970), p. 49, n. 88, refers to the biography by gTsang mkhan-chen entitled *rGyal mchog chos dbyings rdo rje'i rnam thar dad pa'i shing rta*, then inaccessible. It has since been published among gTsang mkhan-chen's collected writings under the above title. According to Mr. Tashi Tsering, there is also what seems to be a versified autobiography of the same Karma-pa found in the collected writings of gTsang mkhan-chen, evidently included there by mistake.

Chapter 10

Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas

Another outstanding Karma bka'-brgyud-pa master who, like the 10th Karma-pa, is said to have painted in his own distinctive Karma-sgar-bris manner was Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas (1700–1774), founder of the great monastery of dPal-spungs in the vicinity of Derge.[597] In previous chapters we have witnessed periods of strong Karma bka'-brgyud-pa influence in central Tibet, especially in the 16th century, which was precisely the period of Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis and the beginnings of the sGar-bris style. Then, in connection with the life and artistic career of the 10th Karma-pa, we saw the nearly total destruction of this tradition in dBus and gTsang in the mid 17th century. Now with Si-tu we shall see how in the 18th century the Karma-bka'-brgyud traditions managed to revive themselves to some degree in Khams, a restoration which owed much of its success to Si-tu Paṇ-chen's personal efforts and charisma.



Fig. 134. Si-tu Paṇ-chen. From the Derge Kanjur Catalogue, vol. 315, f. 171a, left. Published J. Kolmaś (1978).

Like his contemporary and colleague the Sa-skya-pa scholar Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen who was also active at the Derge court, the Si-tu sprul-sku combined in himself both great scholarship and practical artistic talent.[598] On the scholarly side, Si-tu Paṇ-chen wrote a number of works touching directly or indirectly on various aspects of art, and he is even said by one recent source to have penned a treatise on iconometry, though such a work is otherwise unknown.[599] On the practical side, Kong-sprul ranked him along with the Karma-pa Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje as one of the all-time individual geniuses of Tibetan painting.[600]

Early Studies

Si-tu Paṇ-chen began to paint when young, even before he had received any formal training in religious art.[601] On his first visit to mTshur-phu before receiving instruction, he was asked by the 12th Karma-pa Byang-chub-rdo-rje (1703–1732) to paint a picture of the 8th Zhwa-dmar dPal-ldan Chos-kyi-don-grub and of Mahākāla in the form of mGon-po Ber-nag-can.[602] Both the 12th Karma-pa[603] and 8th Zhwa-dmar[604] had also practiced painting at one time or another, so the young Si-tu found himself in a very active milieu in this respect.



Fig. 135. 12th Karma-pa Byang-chub-rdo-rje. Detail from a modern redrawing of a Kar-shod-pa composition, after Karma Thinley (1980), p. 112.

Si-tu first learned iconometric proportions in a formal way at the age of fifteen from a certain Kong-po sprul-sku-ba, during his first visit to central Tibet; up until this time he had simply painted according to his own innate gifts.[605] He also studied Indian scripts under him, learning directly from Indian manuscripts.[606] Soon thereafter at the Zhwa-dmar's monastic seat of Yangs-pa-can, the steward (*phyag mdzod*) showed him the old Indian cast-metal figures in the library chapel (Phyag-dpe lha-khang) and introduced him to the traditional stylistic classifications of Buddhist sculpture.[607]

Among the various impressions the young Si-tu sprul-sku absorbed as a novice artist, his viewing here at Yangs-pa-can of murals painted by sMan-bla-don-grub may have been influential. When Si-tu first visited that monastery in the company of the great Karma-pa lamas in 1714, because of his interest in painting and kindred arts he was allowed by the steward to stay in the so-called Guru Temple (Bla-ma lha-khang) where he could view murals of the "hundred adepts (or *mahāsiddhas*)" (*grub brgya*) painted by sMan-thang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub.[608] Often during his later travels in central Tibet, he took pains to investigate carefully the paintings and statues he met with, and in his autobiography he mentions for instance the initial difficulties he faced in being allowed to see at Gong-dkar the paintings and sculpted images of the old master mKhyen-brtse.[609]

Paintings He Commissioned in Later Years

Si-tu Paṇ-chen, like the earlier Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje, seems to have been a keen observer of other styles of painting who was willing to incorporate into his own works what he saw, either selectively or *en bloc*. Certain of his surviving paintings were placed in different stylistic classes by later writers. Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, for instance, mentioned seeing at Karma-dgon in Khams five paintings of protective deities by him, including at least one in a New sMan-ris style (*sman gsar zhal tshugs*).[610] Yet the style that predominated in most of his works was the Karma-sgar-bris, and it was this style that he cultivated and patronized most heavily. For instance, he himself described a set of thangkas that he painted in 1726 depicting eight great tantric adepts (*mahāsiddhas*; Tib. *grub chen brgyad*) in a style "like the sGar-bris."[611] He offered these thangkas to the Derge ruler bsTan-pa-tshe-ring together with his request for permission to build his monastery at dPal-spungs, which was then graciously accepted and generously supported by the king.

Then on the third day of the ninth lunar month of the same year, 1726, he began sketching a set of thangkas depicting the Jātakas. Perhaps this was a depiction of the so-called "Hundred Jātakas" (*sKyes rabs brgya rtsa*) cycle associated with the Karma-pa Rang-byung-rdo-rje, or of one of the smaller compilations such as the thirty-four-Jātaka collection of Aryaśūra. The source does not specify which. Some nineteen years later (in 1745) he gave the text transmission for the former work to the young 13th Karma-pa, as one of the first teachings so given.[612]

In 1729 he founded his monastery of dPal-spungs not far from Derge. For painting the murals there, he invited twenty-three painters from "Karma"—i.e. artists based at 'Og-min Karma-dgon, the previous main seat of the Si-tu incarnations.



Fig. 136. bsTan-pa-tshe-ring, King of Derge. From the Derge Kanjur Catalogue, vol. 315, f. 171a, right. Published J. Kolmaś (1978).

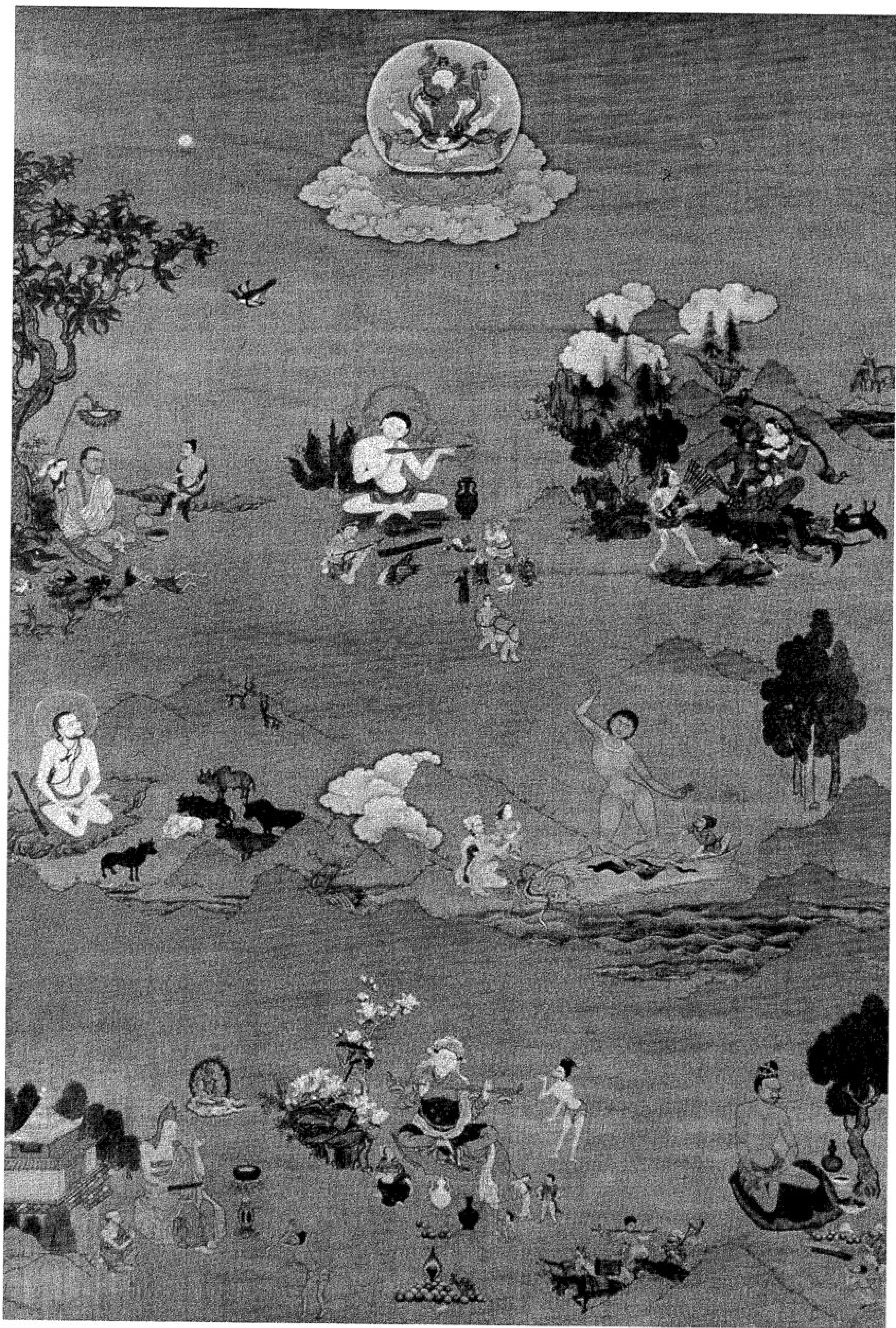


Fig. 137. Mahāsiddhas. Thangka, Khams, 18th/19th c., ca. 69 x 46 cm. Said to be the second thangka of a set of eleven, "from a bKa'-brgyud-pa monastery in E. Tibet [Khams]." Published: P. Pal (1969), no. 17.



Fig. 138, 139. The Eighty-Four Mahāsiddhas. Details.
After the Tibet House Museum Catalogue (New Delhi, 1965), pls. 11-15.



He also drew the designs for the pounces to be used in painting the woodwork. He himself planned the great standing main image, though the artists helping with the actual execution of this and other large figures included Lha-bzo Phrin-las-rab-'phel,[613] the latter's brother, and a certain A-gro sKyid-rgyal. On the first day of the fifth month the painters began the sketches for murals of the main assembly hall, and here Si-tu Paṇ-chen himself drew and planned the colors of paintings depicting the Sixteen Elders in Indian dress, Vajrapāṇi and a protective deity. The murals of the assembly hall were finished on the fourteenth of the month. On that date Si-tu made generous offerings to the painters, and they departed for Derge.[614]

In about 1732, not long before the two great Karma-pa lamas departed for China, he began the sketching of a thangka showing the "Eight Great Sons [of the Buddha]" (*nye sras brgyad= nye ba'i sras chen brgyad*), i.e. of the eight great Bodhisattvas. Here he seems to have been copying an original painted by the great artist dKon-mchog-phan-bde of E or g.Ye (here called just sprul-sku-ba Phan-bde), who had been an artist of the 9th Karma-pa and a teacher of Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis.[615]

Then in 1733 at dPal-spungs soon after hearing the disastrous news of the sudden passing away of both the Karma-pa and Zhwa-dmar in China, he began designing a set of thangkas depicting the one hundred and eight stories from the *dPag bsam 'khri shing* series of Avadāna tales and related themes.[616] He set up a workshop for executing some thirty thangkas for which he himself sketched the compositions according to his own imagination and original ideas. In planning these paintings he tried to execute the drawings, coloring, shading and outlining similar to those found in scroll paintings of a Chinese style (*rgya ris si thang*) and to depict the palaces and costumes in an Indian or Nepalese manner.[617] The next year at dPal-spungs he completed the remaining sketches for these thangkas. For those that had already been sketched he began directing the painting, beginning with coloring and including shading, outlining and the gold finishing details. For this purpose he gradually instructed a number of master painters of Kar-shod and had them do the main painting work.[618] He believed that through these paintings and the other activities he had patronized during this period, including both painting and sculpture, the artistic traditions of Khams were now clearly to be seen. Thus it seems he was consciously doing his best to revive and maintain these Khams-pa traditions.[619]

Four years later in 1737, after returning to eastern Tibet from central Tibet, Si-tu performed the vivification ceremony [*rab gnas*] for this great set of *dPag bsam 'khri shing* thangkas.[620] The originals remained at dPal-spungs, and they inspired many later copies. (See Pls. 49 and 52–54.)

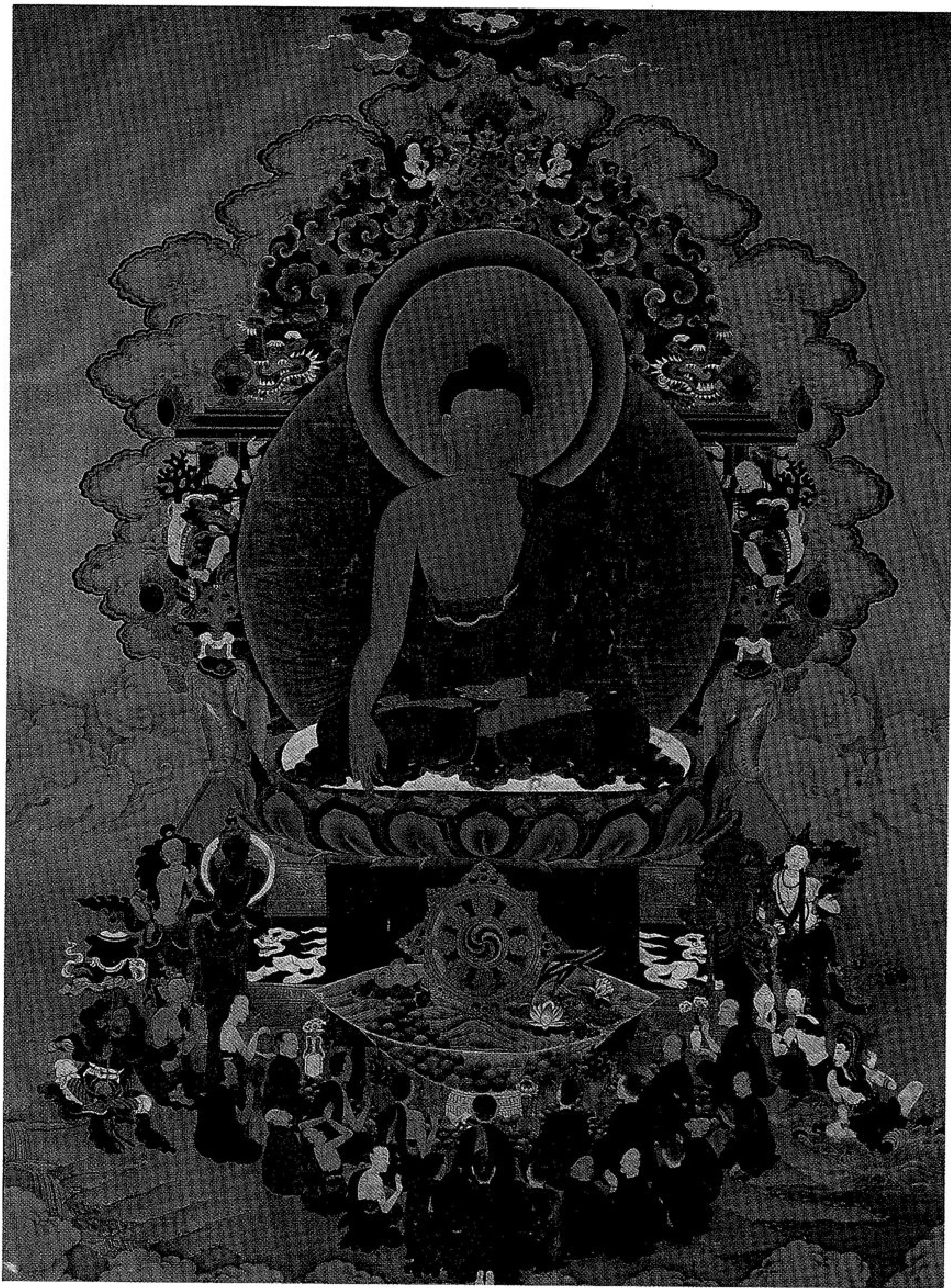
Elsewhere Si-tu Paṇ-chen himself similarly described his own paintings of such a set:[621]

> I have followed the Chinese masters in color and in mood expressed and form, and I have depicted lands, dress, palaces and so forth as actually seen in India. Even though there is present here all the discriminating skill of sMan-thang—[both] New and Old—and the mKhyen [-ris] tradition followers, Bye'u-sgang-pa and the sGar-bris masters, I have made [these paintings] different in a hundred thousand [particulars of] style.

He wrote this after his first pilgrimage to Nepal (and "India") as a young man in 1723/24, when he had gained some firsthand experiences about the dress and so forth of those lands (he later visited Nepal for a second time in 1748/49).[622]

While in Lhasa in 1736 he visited the ruler of Tibet, Pho-lha-nas bSod-nams-stobs-rgyal (d. 1747), who in 1730–31 had sponsored the carving of the Narthang Kanjur printing blocks. Si-tu Paṇ-chen himself had more recently, in 1733, completed the carving of the blocks for the Derge Kanjur and had written the catalogue to it. Pho-lha-nas asked him about building an image of Maitreya, to which Si-tu gave a written reply.[623] (Pho-lha-nas elsewhere is said to have erected a Maitreya statue at Lhasa dKyil-'khor-sdings in 1735.)

Si-tu at this time expressed a preference to stay in dBus province, which was religiously and culturally the center of Tibet. But he was unable to do so, owing to the insistence of his great patron, bsTan-pa-tshe-ring, king of Derge.[624]



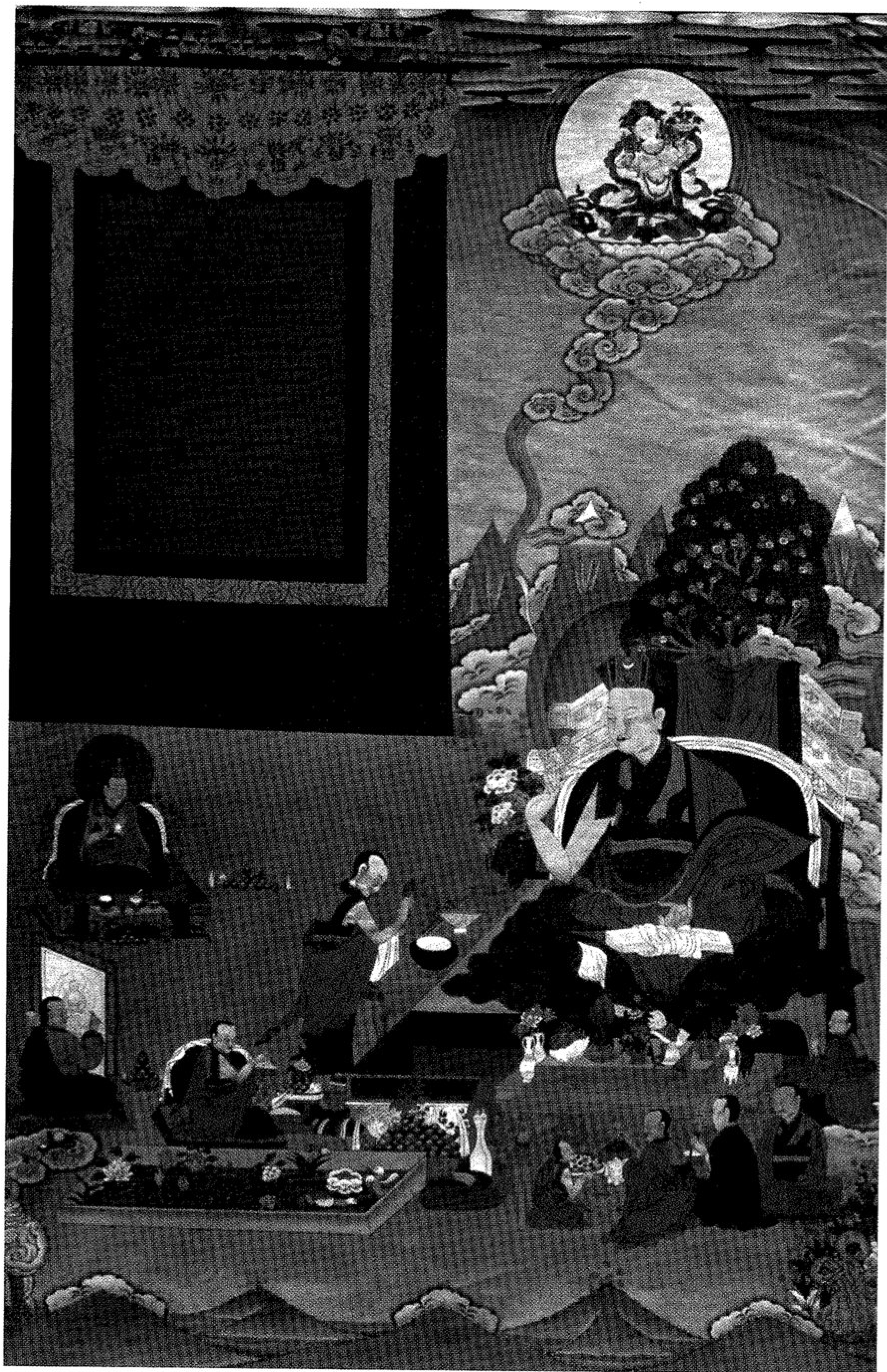
Pl. 49. Buddha Śākyamuni. The central painting of a set of Avadāna thangkas designed by Si-tu Paṇ-chen. Thangka, Khams, 18th or 19th c.?, 80 x 58.5 cm. Collection E. Jucker. Published: B. Olschak and Wangyal (1973), p. 72; cf. sKyes rabs dpag bsam 'khri shing, no. 1.

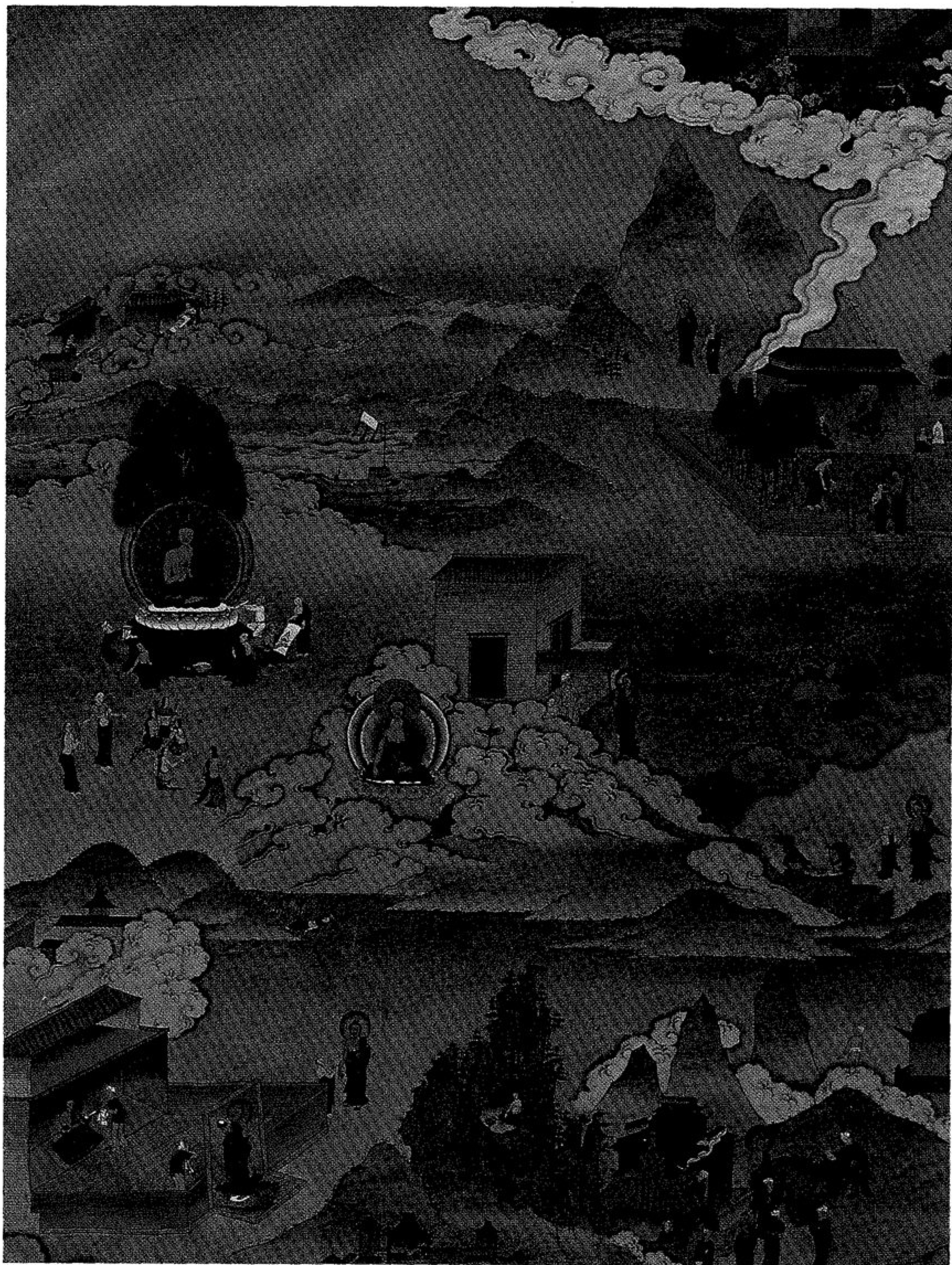


Pl. 50. White Tārā (sGrol-dkar Yid-bzhin-'khor-lo), surrounded by White Tārās protecting from the eight dangers. The painting (or main figure?) said by recent tradition to have been painted by Si-tu Paṇ-chen. Thangka, Khams, mid-18th c.? Derge collection. Photograph M. Ricard. Cf. the similar painting published in sKyes rabs dpag bsam 'khri shing, no. 2.



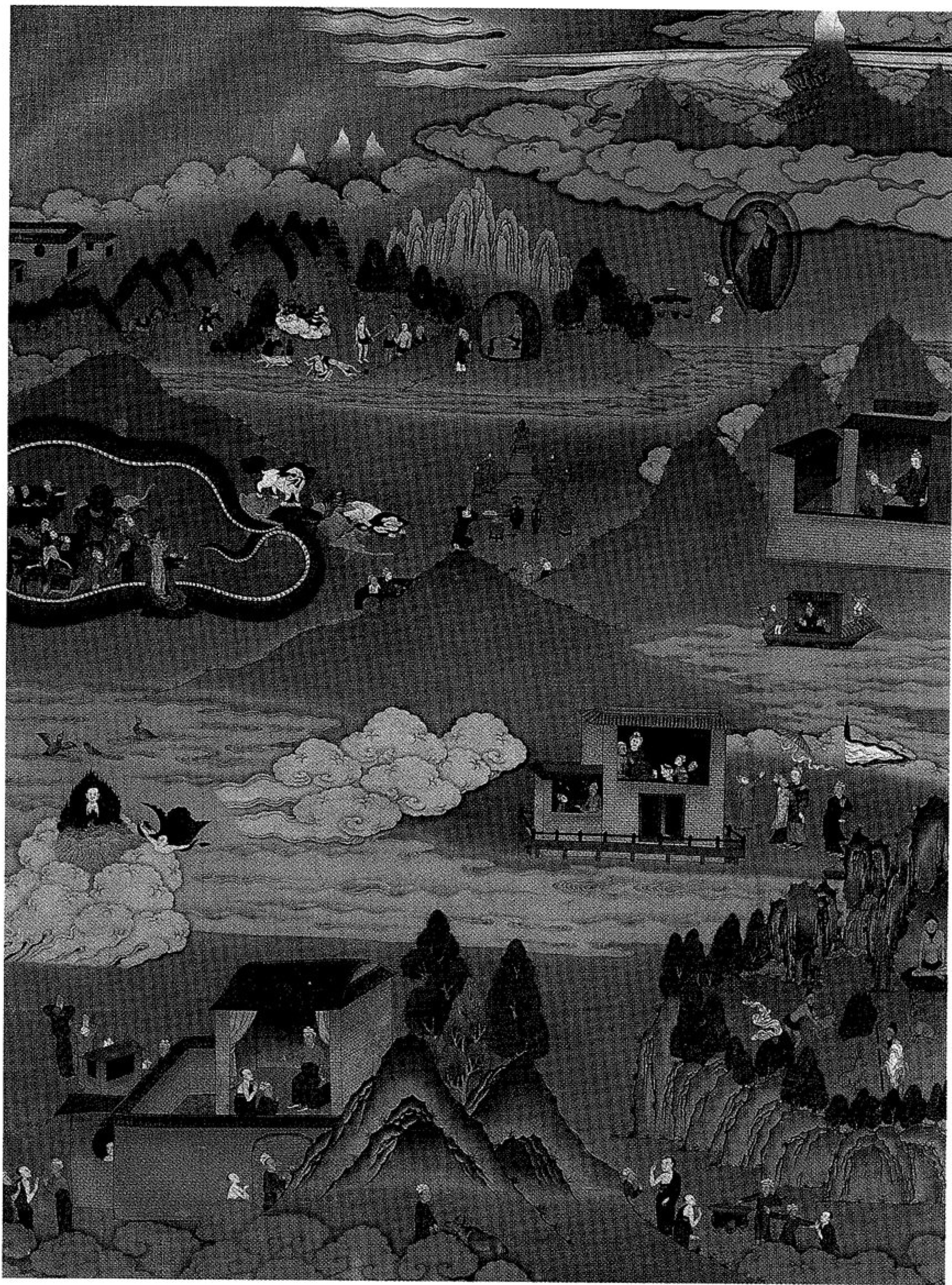
Pl. 51. White Tārā. Detail of previous thangka. Said to be the work of Si-tu Paṇ-chen. Thangka, Khams, mid-18th c.? Derge collection. Photograph M. Ricard.





Pl. 53. Episodes seven through eleven from the Avadāna Kalpalatā. The third narrative thangka in a set designed by Si-tu Paṇ-chen. Thangka, Khams, 18th or 19th c.?, 76.5 x 56 cm. Collection E. Jucker. Published: B. Olschak and Wangyal (1973), pp. 72f.

◁ *Pl. 52. Si-tu Paṇ-chen as patron of the Avadāna Kalpalatā series of thangkas. The final painting of the set. Thangka, Khams, 19th c.? Published sKyes rabs dpag bsam 'khri shing, no. 25.*



Pl. 54. Episodes one hundred through one hundred and five from the Avadāna Kalpalatā. The twentieth narrative thangka in a set designed by Si-tu Paṇ-chen. Thangka, Khams, 18th or 19th c.?, 76.5 x 56 cm. Collection E. Jucker. Published: B. C. Olschak and Wangyal (1973), pp. 72f.



Fig. 140. Sahaja Cakrasamvara. Thangka, Khams, 18th c., 30.5 x 22 cm. Private collection, Cologne. An inscription identifies this small devotional painting as the work of Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-snang-ba.

Patronage of rJe-stod Tshe-dbang-grags-pa

When in Khams, Si-tu Paṇ-chen seems to have extensively patronized the artists from rJe-stod who worked at or near Lha-stengs-pa (near Karma-dgon).[625] In ca. 1741 his diary records his receiving at Lha-stengs from a rJe-stod artist the masks of the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava. (At the same place he was also given three thangkas of Tārā by the Tshe-ne lha-bzo.[626])

He had taught this same main rJe-stod artist Sanskrit metrics in 1740.[627] In 1741 he was invited to rJe-stod itself, but did not go.[628]



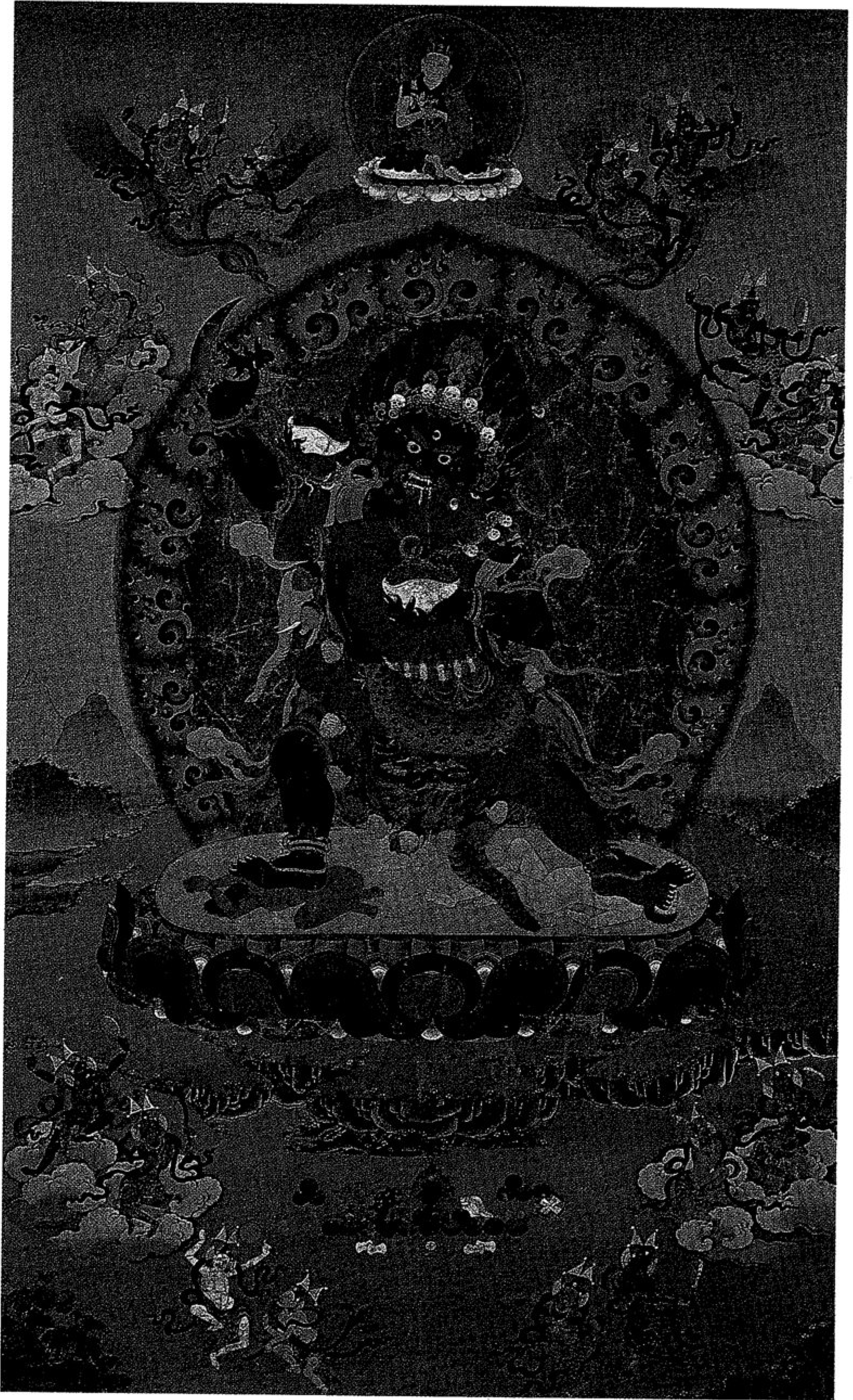
Fig. 141. Vajravārahī. Thangka, Khams, 18th c., 25 x 19 cm. Essen collection. Published: G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo, vol. 2, p. 159; no. II-338. An inscription identifies it as the work of Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-snang-ba.

Later, around 1750, we find Si-tu Paṇ-chen visiting Lha-stengs-pa again and commissioning there twenty-seven thangkas of major tantric deities from the master artist rJe-stod lha-bzo Tshe-dbang-grags-pa. Here Si-tu Paṇ-chen personally designed each thangka and took special care to ensure that their proportions agreed with the systems prescribed in the Kālacakra and Samvarodaya Tantras. He witnessed the beginning of the sketching and gave a celebration marking the start of the project.[629] Copies of probably this same set were preserved in the gSer-gdung-khang at Khams-pa-sgar Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs-gling, where they were seen by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu in 1918, who called them "tantric thangkas following the dPal-spungs model."[630] Also seen there by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu was a forty-one thangka set of the kings of Shambhala following the dPal-spungs model (*rigs ldan dpal spungs ltar*).[631] (See Pls. 57–58.)

rJe-stod Tshe-dbang-grags-pa's artistic lineage is otherwise known to have flourished further. An iconometric manual of the tradition was written by the subsequent master sGa-stod gNas-bzang-ba dGe-'dun. The latter specified at the end of his work that in order to follow certain detailed expositions of proportions in the last and earlier passages in the book, one needed the illustrative line drawings of rJe-stod Tshe-dbang-grags-pa. sGa-stod gNas-bzang-ba mainly based one section of his work on the proportional drawings of the painter dMar-yon Chos-grub. For a subsequent passage he was indebted to the proportional drawings (*thig dpe*) and instructions (*zhal khrid*) of Tshe-dbang-grags-pa, in addition to some old drawings from other sources.[632]



Fig. 142. 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po. Thangka, Khams, 18th c., 39 x 24 cm. Essen collection. Published: G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 2, p. 93; = II 205 (Inv. 7538). Provisionally attributed to Si-tu Paṇ-chen, no inscription.



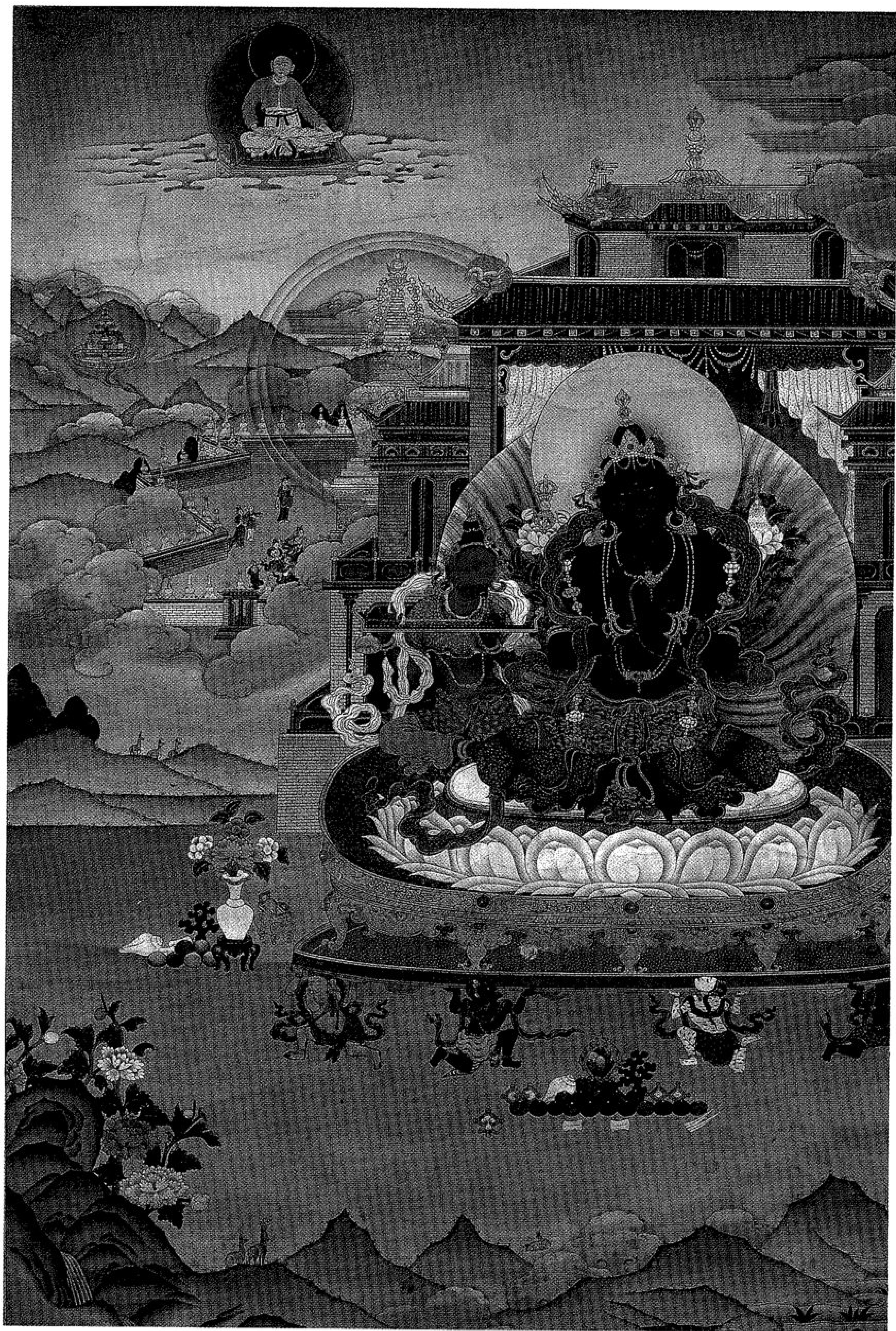
Pl. 55. Hayagrīva. Note the depiction of Si-tu Paṇ-chen at the top, middle. Thangka, Khams, late-18th or 19th c., 100 x 62 cm. ("E. Tibet, early 18th c."). Essen collection. Published: G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 171; II 325 (I 107).



Pl. 56. Vajradhara and Eight Mahāsiddhas. Thangka, Khams, 18th/19th c., 69 x 46 cm. Said to be the ninth thangka from a set of eleven, "from a bKa'-brgyud-pa monastery in E. Tibet [Khams]." Possession of the gNas-nang dPa'-bo Rin-po-che. Published: P. Pal (1969), no. 16; Chibetto-no-Hihoten [Exhibition of Secret Treasures from Tibet] (Tokyo: 1967), no. 12.



Pl. 57. Sucandra, fourteenth of the twenty-five Kulika (Rigs-ldan) kings of Shambhala. Thangka in the Kar-shod-pa style, presumably following a dPal-spungs model. Thangka, Khams, 19th c., 79 x 55 cm. Joachim Baader, Galerie für tibetische Kunst, Munich. An inscription under the main figure reads: chos kyi rgyal po rigs ldan zla ba bzang po la na mo//. The figure above is „dus zhabs bha dra ba."



Pl. 58. Anantavijāya, twenty-fourth of the twenty-five Kulika (Rigs-ldan) Kings of Shambhala. In the Kar-shod-pa style, presumably following a dPal-spungs model. Thangka, Khams, 19th c., 79 x 55 cm. Joachim Baader, Galerie für tibetische Kunst, Munich. The inscription under the main figure reads: chos rgyal rigs ldan mtha' yas rnam rgyal bzang po la na mo//. The figure above is perhaps „grub thob kun bzang po (?).“

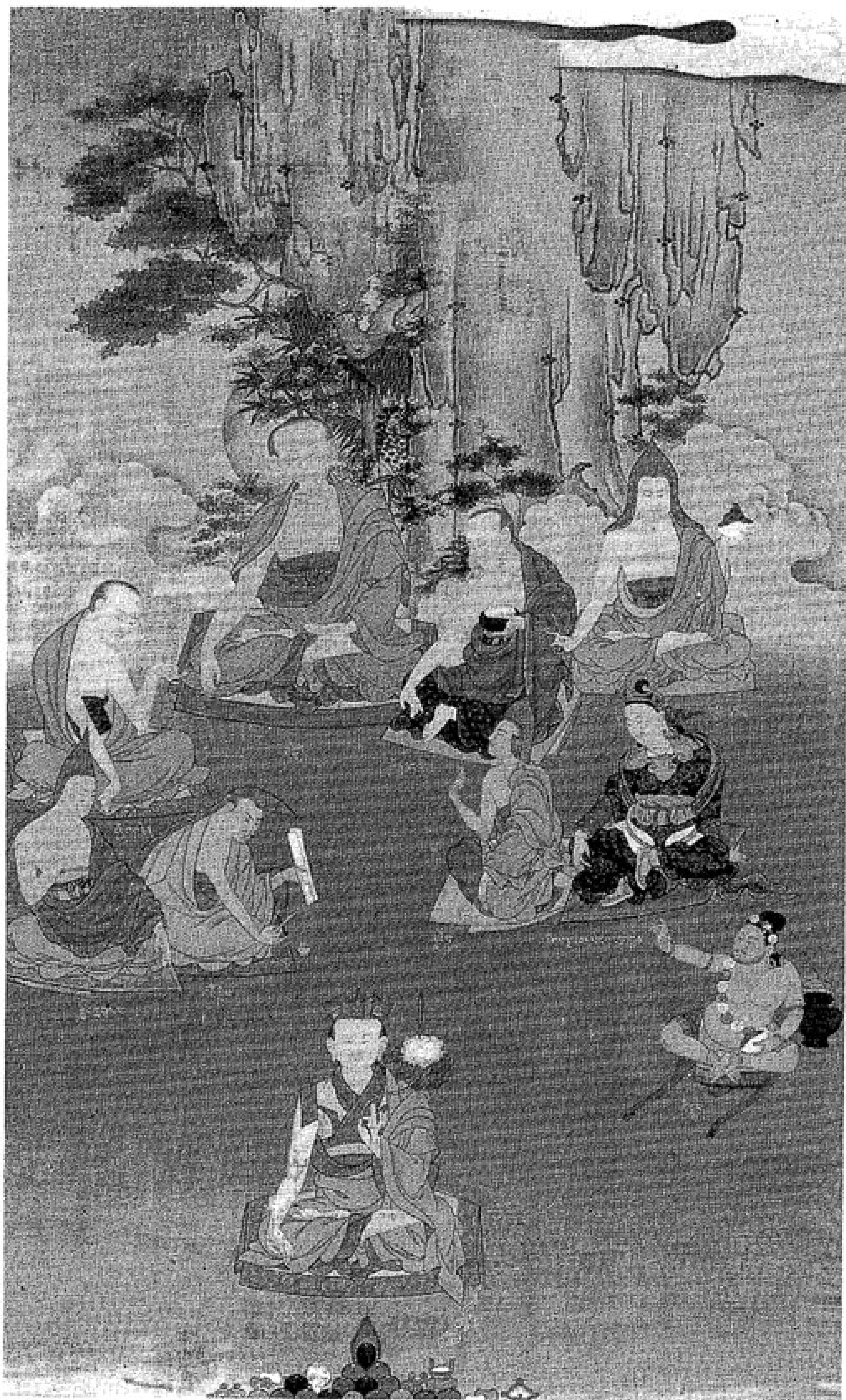




Fig. 143. Si-tu Paṇ-chen, beneath nine Indian Buddhist masters. Thangka, Khams, ca. 19th c. Courtesy of Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Fig. 143A. Detail of preceding figure showing Si-tu Paṇ-chen.

"Portraits" of Si-tu Pan-chen

There exist paintings and drawings of Si-tu Paṇ-chen that were probably executed either during his lifetime or soon thereafter, and these are interesting not only in their own right, but also as points of comparison with the portrayals of other Karma bka'-brgyud or "Kaṃ-tshang" masters who wore very similar red hats. One such painting of Si-tu, which is now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, depicts the master in the foreground of a multi-figure composition, and he is clearly identified as "Ta'i Si-tu Chos-kyi-snang-ba" by an inscription placed beneath. In this painting he is, moreover, linked to the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī through an additional attribute: a sword of wisdom on a lotus, the stem of which he holds in his left hand.[633] (See Fig. 143.)



Fig. 144. Si-tu Paṇ-chen. Xylograph. From the dPal-spungs edition of Si-tu Paṇ-chen's Autobiography, f. 1b.

Fig. 145. Si-tu Paṇ-chen. Detail of thangka showing ceremonial hat. After G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 141. See also Pl. 60.



Fig. 146. Zhwa-dmar Karma-pa (possibly the 4th, Chos-kyi-grags-pa, 1453-1524). Detail of thangka showing ceremonial hat. After G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 143. (The main figure was a teacher of the 1st Karma-phrin-las-pa [1456-1539].) See also Pl. 61.



Though one does not find a rigidly established iconography of hand gestures and other minor attributes in portrayals of later lamas, an important recurring feature of Si-tu Paṇ-chen's "portraits" is the distinctive red ceremonial hat that he (and the other Si-tus) wore. The jewel-embossed golden central emblem on the front of the hat consists, however, not of a crossed vajra but rather of three jewels shown in simplified drawings as three contiguous circles. Moreover, the cloud emblems to the right and left often are positioned with their tails trailing down and backward at a slant.[634] Furthermore, the upper edge of both right and left sides of the hat is not always perfectly smooth, but instead commonly possesses a small indentation or notch.



Fig. 147. Si-tu Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan. Xylograph. From the dPal-spungs edition of Si-tu Paṇ-chen's autobiography, f. 1b.

On the basis of his ceremonial hat and other factors, one can similarly identify another magnificent portrait of a Kaṃ-tshang lama with hands in teaching gesture (holding the stems of lotuses, upon which rest a sword and a book, the emblems of Mañjuśrī) on a soft yellow-ocher background as definitely one of the Si-tus, and probably as none other than Si-tu Paṇ-chen (Pl. 60).[635] Few personalities of this period would have been more deserving of such a representation as a scholar learned in many subjects (see the background details) and as an emanation of Mañjuśrī. The physical similarities between this portrait and the small figure of Si-tu atop a thangka of Hayagrīva (Pl. 55) can also hardly be overlooked, especially regarding the faces.[636] The large painting of Si-tu would thus seem to represent a particular sGar-bris style associated with him and the artists he supported.[637]

The hat worn in another large "Zhwa-dmar" portrait in the Musée Guimet also does not have a crossed vajra in the front-center of his hat, but rather something again resembling a three-jewel medallion, with a small gold bar below. That, together with his Mañjuśrī *phyag-mtshan* and teaching gesture, would possibly mark this figure too as a Si-tu.[638] But here the identification is doubtful because the upper edges of the hat are smooth and the cloud emblems have their tails painting forward and upward—which incidentally was also not normal for a Zhwa-dmar's hat in later dPal-spungs models.[639] The latter painting seems to show more distinctively Kar-shod-pa stylistic features, though the composition is relatively open and airy.

The iconography of the Kaṃ-tshang lamas, like that of all the major teaching lineages of the other Tibetan Buddhist traditions, will require further detailed studies, beginning with a systematic description of one or more complete lineages (preferably of the main lineage, which for the Karma bKa'-brgyud-pa means that of the Mahāmudrā). This is the most promising key to unlock the striking and exquisite masterpieces of religious portraiture that this tradition produced.



Pl. 59. Padmasambhava. Attributed to the 10th Karma-pa, but probably by a sGar-bris painter of 18th-c. Khams. Thangka on gold-colored silk, Khams, 18th c.?, 36 x 19 cm. Essen collection. Published: G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 108; = no. II 181 (I 64).



Pl. 60. Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas. Thangka, Khams, 18th c., 79 x 53 cm. Essen collection. Published: G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989); = no. II 246 (I 85). There the main figure was wrongly identified as Gar-dbang-chos-kyi-dbang-phyug, Zhwa-dmar (1556-1630). Compare the stylistically similar painting of Padmasambhava in Pl. 59, attributed to the 10th Karma-pa in G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 141.

Si-tu Pan-chen's Stylistic Legacy and Pupils

Si-tu Paṇ-chen is considered by at least one modern source to have founded a new stylistic tradition: a "New sGar-bris" (*sgar bris gsar pa*).[640] And as mentioned above, his activities are said to have influenced the later schools of the Karma-sgar-bris in Khams. Several of his famous sets of paintings, such as those depicting the Jātakas of the *dPag bsam 'khri shing* cycle, were taken as models by later artists, probably in combination with brief descriptions or inscriptions he had written.[641] For instance, already in 1750 when the Ngor mkhan-po dPal-ldan-chos-skyong (1702–1769) wanted to commission a set of the *dPag bsam 'khri shing* Avadāna cycle in Derge, he summoned the painter Lha-dga' of Karma Lha-steng and his brother, and ordered them to execute the paintings following an original set that had been designed (*bkod pa*) by Si-tu Paṇ-chen. He also ordered Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen to supervise and instruct the artists regarding minor points they could improve in their execution of the pictures.[642]

In 1770, five years before his death, Si-tu continued to design and commission various works of religious art, including a set of thangkas of the Eight Manifestations of Padmasambhava by the artist rGya-tshan.[643] This may have been a set subsequently kept at dPal-spungs and used as a model by later painters.

Si-tu Paṇ-chen worked closely with many artists in the course of his life. His biographer states that his students of painting and sculpture included the following, who were no different in their skill from the great sMan-bla-don-grub and mKhyen-brtse:[644] sprul-sku-ba Phrin-las-rab-'phel,[645] [Kar-shod] Karma-bkra-shis,[646] and gZhis-pa Tshe-brtan-pa. By the time of his death, according to his biographer 'Be-lo, he had produced:

> "...over one hundred thangkas [of standard multiple-painting sets] such as twenty-painting sets of the *dPag bsam 'khri shing*, sets of the Eight Great Adepts (*grub chen brgyad*) and of the "Six Ornaments" (*rgyan drug*) [the greatest Masters of Indian Buddhism],[647] which were a refreshing treat [lit.: "a springtime"] for the eyes and which had previously here in Tibet never been produced by any artist, not even by sMan-thang-pa, mKhyen-brtse or Bye'u. And further, for those who requested it, he made countless works of religious art, both paintings and sculptures, of the Buddha and his sons, [the bodhisattvas]."[648]

A painting of Tārā by his hand was deposited as one of the holy objects in his reliquary stūpa, together with paintings by other great lamas of the Karma bka'-brgyud and allied traditions. These included some paintings planned or painted by Kaḥ-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu (1698–1755), a master who played a very important role in Si-tu Paṇ-chen's spiritual development: for instance, a painting of the pure land of Sukhāvatī planned by Tshe-dbang-nor-bu and painted by Si-tu himself.[649] A few other paintings by Si-tu Paṇ-chen's hand are said to survive even today (e.g. Figs. 140 and 141).[650] As mentioned above, many of the thangkas he designed were later avidly used as models for copying,[651] and numerous later copies (or copies of copies) still exist in various parts of the world.[652] A systematic investigation of the sources on Si-tu Paṇ-chen's life—especially the excerpts from his diaries which form the bulk of his "autobiography"—will no doubt reveal much more, not only about his own religious art but also about other great artists.[653]

Notes

597 For his autobiography, see Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*.

598 Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 307.5 (154a), refers to Zhu-chen as "Zhu-dag bla-ma."

599 According to Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 112: *bris sku'i cha tshad kyi skor la byang bdag pa rnam rgyal grags bzang/ sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho/ jo nang tā ra nā tha/ si tu chos kyi 'byung gnas/ kong sprul yon tan rgya mtsho sogs nas kyang mdzad yod pa so so'i gsung 'bum la gzigs na mkhyen par 'gyur ro*.

600 Kong-sprul, pt. 1, p. 573.2 (*oṃ* 209b). Kong-sprul's particularly high estimation of these two as artists was also no doubt partly the result of his devotion to them as masters of his own religious tradition.

601 Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 41.2 (*a* 21a): *'di skabs ri mo'i lugs gang yin med pa zhig go//*.

602 Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 458.3 (*na* 228b).

603 'Be-lo Tshe-dbang-kun-khyab in his inventory of Si-tu Paṇ-chen's memorial stūpa, *Byams mgon*, p. 713 (15a), records the presence there of two paintings by Byang-chub-rdo-rje: *byang chub rdo rje'i phyag bris rta nag lcags ral can gyi sku thang/ .... byang chub rdo rje'i phyag bris yab sras gsum gyi sku thang/*.

604 Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 22.4 (11b), mentions seeing five thangka paintings by this Zhwa-dmar at Karma Lha-stengs. 'Be-lo Tshe-dbang-kun-khyab in his inventory of Si-tu Paṇ-chen's memorial stūpa, *Byams mgon*, p. 713 (15a), also records the presence of a painting of Avalokiteśvara by the 8th Zhwa-dmar and a statue of Amitābha cast by him: *zhwa dmar brgyad pa'i phyag blugs 'od dpag med kyi sku dang/ .... zhwa dmar brgyad pa'i phyag bris spyan ras gzigs kha sar pāṇi'i sku thang/*.

605 Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 45.6 (*a* 23a): *lha ris sngon nas rtsal bris lta bu'i phyogs mgo dod tsam yong thog kong po sprul sku las kyang thig rtsa 'ga' zhig bslab//*.

606 Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 459.3 (*na* 229a).

607 Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 47.1 (*a* 24a): *der phyag mdzod nas phyag dpe lha khang gi li ma rnams dang/ bya ba'i dpyad ston gyi yi ge go bstun nas sku rgyu dang bzo khyad sogs so sor 'di yin gyi ngo sprod mdzad pas 'di nas bzung rten gsum gyi nyams lhus theng bar gyur/*.

608 *Ibid.*, p. 42.2 (*a* 21b): *bdag de skabs lha bris sogs la dad brtson che bar yod pas 'og phyag mdzod nas bla ma lha khang du grags pa'i sman bla don grub pa'i phyag ris grub brgya yod pa der sdod du 'jug pa gnang/*. According to the late Dezhung Rinpoche (1906–1987), oral communication, Seattle, 1980, murals attributed to sMan-thang-pa were still extant at Yangs-pa-can when he visited there in the late 1940s.

609 See, for instance, Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, pp. 90.7–91.1 (45b-46a), where he describes his difficulties at Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan in 1722 when trying to see mKhyen-brtse's art works, which he considered art of the highest excellence, worthy of being copied or imitated.

610 Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 22.4 (11b): *chos 'byung phyag bris phyag drug/ gur/ lha mo/ ma ning/ gro lod sman gsar zhal tshugs byas pa bcas thang ka lnga/*.

611 Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 140.7 (70b): *grub chen brgyad kyi zhal thang sgar bris ltar gyi skya ris tshon mdangs dang bcas bris nas...* See also Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 504.2 (*na* 251b). According to Thrangu Rinpoche, March 1995 Bodhnath, there exists a good set of the *Grub chen brgyad* in Sikkim, said to derive from an original by Si-tu. It has been used as an example by painters at the Sikkim Handicraft Center, who produce copies of it. According to Tenga Rinpoche, Swayambhunath, March 1995, the eight great adepts (Grub chen brgyad) are: 1. Indrabhūti, 2. Kukuripa, 3. Padmavajra, 4. Ārya Nāgārjuna, 5. Ḍombhi Heruka, 6. Lūhipa, 7. Dril-bu-pa, 8. Saraha. They are the mahāsiddhas who inhabit the eight cemetery grounds at the edge of the maṇḍala.
Tenga Rinpoche, Swayambhunath, March 1995, also informed me that in 'Ban-chen dgon-pa there formerly was a set of thangkas sponsored by one of the previous Sangs-rgyas-gnyan-pa sprul-skus, a nine-thangka series of the Great Adepts (Grub chen dgu thang) following an original planned by Si-tu Paṇ-chen. There was also for a time a set of paintings depicting the eighty-four mahāsiddhas in Si-tu's style in the Tibet House Museum, New Delhi. This set is described by Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 112, as belonging to the late gNas-nang dPa'-bo Rin-po-che: *bar lam ldi li'i bod khang nang/ gnas nang dpa' bo rin po che'i rten gras grub thob brgyad bcu'i zhal thang kār bris 'gran zla med pa zhig mjal ba/*. The set was only on loan and was subsequently reclaimed by the owner. One painting from the set of mahāsiddha thangkas in sGar-bris style (size 27 1/8 × 18 1/8 in.) appears in P. Pal (1969), no. 16, color plate. Here it is said to be no. 9 from a set of eleven. (It was previously published in *Chibetto-no-Hihoten* [Exhibition of Secret Treasures from Tibet], Tokyo, 1967, no. 12.) No. 17 from the same set is a black and white plate of the second in the set. (See Pl. 56 and Figs. 137–139.)

612 Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 534.4 (*na* 266b).

613 Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas, p. 247, also mentions a Phrin-las-rab-'phel in this tradition.

614 Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, pp. 146–7 (23b-24a): *tshes bdun la gnam yang gi sdeb bris kyi skya bris mgo tshugs/ karma'i lha bris pa nyer gsum 'byor/...* Si-tu and Be-lo, vol. 2, pp. 506.7–507, describe the painting at dPal-spungs in 1729, saying that Si-tu performed the sketches of the murals on the walls of the skylight opening above (*seng g.yab*). Here Be-lo identifies the painters of Karma (*karma'i lha bris*) as "Kar-shod-pa painters."

615 Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 510 (*na* 254a): *sprul sku ba phan bde'i phyag ris nye sras brgyad kyi sku thang skya ris tshugs*/.

616 A copy of this set has been reproduced in Padma-chos-'phel, *dPag bsam 'khri shing blun rmongs byis pa rang nyid go bde ba* (Chendu, Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1991), beginning section. The reproduced set consists of twenty-five thangkas, though this includes two "extra" paintings, two which form the central and concluding paintings, and twenty-one (nos. 4–24) which illustrate stories in one hundred and eight sections. The first story is about *Sa bdag rab gsal* and the 108th is the *sPrin gzhon gyi rtogs brjod*. It is interesting to see that the White Mañjuśrī includes dGe-lugs-pa lamas in the lineage. Si-tu's own descriptive verses are probably in the inscription within thangka no. 25. It is said that Si-tu himself painted the White Tārā in the original series. dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 114, similarly describes the Si-tu planned set as having twenty-three thangkas. It means that the second and third paintings reproduced in *sKyes rabs dpag bsam 'khri shing* (i.e. those with White Tārā and White Mañjuśrī as their main figures) were not part of the original set. He also quotes the inscription from the final painting and gives a brief description of the main stylistic features of Si-tu's style. For a recent artist's account of the importance and also supreme difficulty of painting such sets of the *dPag bsam 'khri shing*, see Thubten Sangay (1984), p. 32.

617 Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 156 (*a* 78b): *rtogs brjod dpag bsam 'khri shing gi bkod pa*/ *rgya ris si thang ltar ri mo tshon mdangs bcad rnams rgya'i lugs dang khang bzang dang cha lugs sogs rgyal bal gyi yul nyams can rang blos gsar du spros pa skya bris rnams rang nyid kyi sug las bgyis pa'i zhal thang sum cu skor bzhengs pa'i las grwa tshugs*/. On this set, see also the mention in Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 511 (*na* 255a). dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 113, states that Si-tu had studied Chinese art, combining its good points with Tibetan art. He also (like the 10th Karma-pa) is said to have founded several monasteries in Sa-tham, 'Jang-yul (Likiang, Yunnan).

618 Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 157.6 (*a* 79a): *dpag bsam 'khri shing gi skya bris 'phro rnams bskyangs*/ *skya ris zin pa rnams la tshon btang nas bzung*/ *mdangs sha bcad*/ *gser bris bcas kar shod kyi sprul sku ba rnams la rim par legs par bslabs kun 'brir bcug*/.

619 *Ibid*., p. 158.1 (79b): *...mdo khams kyi phyogs 'di'i bzo rigs bris 'bur gyi srol yang gsal bar gyur*/. Kong-sprul too noted in particular Si-tu's paintings of the *sKyes rabs dPag bsam khri shing* (Avadāna Kalpalatā), a set of which in the Kar-bris or sGar-bris style were also mentioned by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 24.1 (12b). Tenga Rinpoche, Swayambhunath, March 1995, also expressed the opinion that the sGar-bris was made to flourish again by Si-tu, and that it then spread throughout Khams.

620 Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 519.3 (*na* 259a).

621 Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs (1985), p. 86, evidently quoting Si-tu's own words (from the inscription on the final thangka?): *tshon dang ri mo'i nyams rnam 'gyur*// *rgya nag mkhas pa'i rjes 'brangs nas*// *yul dang cha lugs khang bzang sogs*// *'phags yul mngon sum mthong bzhin byas*// *sman thang gsar rnying mkhyen lugs pa*// *bye'u sgang pa sgar bris pa'i*// *rnam dpyod de kun 'dir ldan yang*// *nyams 'gyur 'bum gyi khyad par byas*//.

622 V. Reynolds, A. Heller and J. Gyatso (1986), p. 158, noticed regarding their painting P13, one of a Si-tu Paṇ-chen-designed set of *Avadāna Kalpalatā* paintings, the presence of Mughal turbans and robes, and from this they correctly inferred the possibility of contact with Mughal India via Kashmir or Nepal. (They also refer in note 5 to several other paintings in other museums and collections which were from this same atelier.) For other paintings of the Avadāna Kalpalatā in this tradition, see for instance B. C. Olschak and T. Wangyal (1974), pp. 72–73; P. Pal (1983), plate 31 and pp. 164f.; P. Pal (1984), plates 67 and 68; and G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, pp. 37 and 39.

623 Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 172.4.

624 Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 514.2 (*na* 256b).

625 Si-tu Paṇ-chen, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 203.2 (102a). The murals of the gTsug-lag-khang at Lha-stengs are described as having been painted in a truly excellent old-fashioned sGar-bris. See Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 19.5 (10a). One of the precious treasures here was a painting of the eighty siddhas in a metal-statue-like style (*li tshugs*) on Rang-byung-rdo-rje's cotton robe. See *ibid*., p. 20.4. The term *li tshugs* or *li tshugs ma* appears several times below: pp. 26.2, 37.6, 60.1, etc.

626 *Ibid*, p. 203.2 (102a): *rje stod lha bzo'i mtshan brgyad 'bag rnams rten bzhag byung*/. Line 4: *tshe ne lha bzos sgrol ma'i thang ka gsum phul*/.

627 *Ibid*., p. 197.6 (99a). He also met the young Khams-sprul, who offered him a seven-thangka set of the Sixteen Elders (*gnas bcu'i bdun thang*).

628 *Ibid*., p. 201.6 (101a).

629 *Ibid*., p. 305.2 (153a): *rje stod lha bzo tshe dbang grags pas rgyud sde'i zhal thang nyer bdun bzhengs pa'i thog mar* ... [long list of deities omitted] ... *dus 'khor dang sdom 'byung gi dgongs pa 'khrul med kyi lugs ltar bdag gis bkod pas khyab par byas te*/ *rim par skya bris 'debs pa'i dbu tshugs*/ *'dzugs ston dang spa dar g.yog*/.

630 Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 8.4–5 (4b): *rgyud sde'i zhal thang dpal spungs dpe ltar*.

631 *Ibid*., p. 8.6 (4b). Several thangkas from Si-tu's tradition are reproduced in the calendar: *Iconographie de l'art sacré du Tibet. Calendrier d'art Tibétain 1995*. Paris, Editions Médicis-Entrelass, 1994. (Original German edition by Wolfgang Jünemann, Schneelöwe Verlagsberatung). These include two from the dPal-spungs depictions

of the Kings of Shambhala: 1. (January): mTha'-yas-rnam-rgyal/Anantavijaya, and 9. (September) Zla-ba-bzang-po/Sucandra, and one of the Guru mtshan brgyad: no. 3 (March), Nyi-ma-'od-zer. (See Pls. 57 and 58.)

[632] sGa-stod gNas-bzang-ba dGe-'dun, p. 141 (71a): *'di'i skabs gong 'og gi zhibs tshad ni rje stod tshe dbang grags pa'i thig dpe ltar dgos shing/ 'dir bris pa kun lha bris dmar yon chos 'grub gyi thig dpe la gzhi bzhag byas te/ phyi rabs lha bzo gsar pa dang rang dang 'dra ba rnams la phan pa'i ched du/ bzo rig 'di la gom 'dris cung zad thob pa'i sga stod gnas bzang ba dge 'dun zhes bya ba'i snyoms las mkhan des bris pa....* See also p. 87 (44): *...thig 'phros 'di thams cad sngar gyi dpe rnying dang/ tshe grags kyi thig dpe dang zhal khrid ltar bris pa yin//.*

[633] This is one painting (c.26 ii) belonging to a set of seven in an evidently late-18th or 19th-century Karma-sgar-bris style (nos. c.26 i-vii). I am indebted to Mr. M. Aris for bringing this painting to my attention. dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 114, also refers to a realistic portrait (*'dra thang*) of Si-tu Paṇ-chen, possibly a self-portrait: "*rje rang nyid kyi 'dra thang rig* [or: *ris*?] *'grel sbrags ma.*"

[634] G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 2, p. 111 (re: no. II 246) give the following valuable information regarding the cloud-emblems on the respective ceremonial hats of these often similar looking lamas: with the Zhwa-dmar the tips of the clouds point backward (i.e. the tails trail back); with the Si-tu they point downward at an angle, and with the rGyal-tshab they point forward (i.e. like those of the Karma-pa's black hat). To this it could be added that the rGyal-tshab sprul-sku's hat is often of a more orange-gold color. See for example Essen and Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 143 (pl. I 86), where the main figure is clearly a Zhwa-dmar (perhaps earlier than the one suggested). The small figure wearing the orange ceremonial hat may well be one of the early rGyal-tshab sprul-sku (cf. the minor figures almost identically portrayed in Karma Thinley [1980], p. 78). See also P. Pal (1983), p. 92, where the Zhwa-dmar's cap has a crossed vajra and also cloud emblems with tails trailing backward. But one must be careful, since not all artists may have known and followed these conventions regarding the cloud emblems. See for instance the cloud emblems on the hat of the Zhwa-dmar Chos-kyi-don-grub in G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 177, pl. I 111.

[635] G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 141 (I 85).

[636] G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 170, no. I 107.

[637] Cf. the stylistically very similar Padmasambhava in G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 108. The latter is said to "bear the artistic signature" of the 10th Karma-pa, though this assertion may need to be reevaluated.

[638] See M. Rhie and R. Thurman (1991), p. 254.

[639] The figure below to the left would seem to be a rGyal-tshab as normally portrayed (orange hat, cloud tails forward).

[640] Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs (1985), p. 86: *nyams 'gyur 'bum gyi khyad par byas// zhes gsungs pa ltar sgar bris gsar pa'i srol gtod byas nas skyes rabs zhal thang sum bcu'i skor dang gnas rten skya ra ma sogs rje nyid kyi phyag bris zhal thang 'ga' zhig da dung yang dpyad ldan rnams kyi tshad ma'i yul du bzhugs/.*

[641] He is said in one later source to have written a work describing how to depict the *Avadāna Kalpalatā* cycle. As listed by Dagyab (1977), p. 119, no. 13, its title is: *sKyes rab dpag bsam 'khri shing zhal thang gi rtogs brjod* (xylograph, Derge ed.). This may derive from Kong-sprul who in his *Shes bya kun khyab*, p. 208b, also refers to the fact that such paintings were described in one of Si-tu's own works: *de ltar khyad par du 'phags pa'i tshul skyes rabs dpag bsam 'khri shing gi zhal thang rtogs brjod kun mkhyen bla ma nyid kyi gsung las gsal lo/.* Si-tu Paṇ-chen's autobiography (p. 176.6 =88b) specifically mentions his having completed the inscriptions (*zhal yig*) for such a set in 1736, but otherwise no such detailed description is known.

[642] See Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 514 (*ta* 261a).

[643] Si-tu and Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 619.2: *rgya tshan lha bzor mtshan brgyad zhal thang sogs rten bzhengs rnams kyi zhal bkod dang.*

[644] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 638.2 (*na* 318b): *sprul sku ba phrin las rab 'phel/ karma bkra shis/ gzhis pa tshe brtan pa sogs bzo rig bris 'bur gyi slob ma yang sman mkhyen rnams dang khyad par med pa du ma/.*

[645] As mentioned above, the artist Phrin-las-rab-'phel was one of the main artists who helped with the actual execution of the large sculpted figures at dPal-spungs in 1729. Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas, p. 247, also mentions a Phrin-las-rab-'phel in this tradition.

[646] He is mentioned below in some detail in chapter 11.

[647] Si-tu's designing of such a set of thangkas has been mentioned above in Chapter 9, in connection with paintings falsely attributed to the 10th Karma-pa. (See figs. 130–133.)

[648] See 'Be-lo, *Byams mgon*, pp. 695.6f. (6a-b): *rtogs brjod dpag bsam 'khri shing gi sku thang nyi shu skor dang/ grub chen brgyad/ rgyan drug sogs kyi sku thang bod yul 'di sngon chad sman mkhyen bye'u sogs ri mo mkhan gang gi yang bskrun du med pa mig gi dpyid du gyur pa brgya phrag las brgal ba dang/ gzhan bskul ba po rnams kyi ngor rgyal* [f. 6b] *ba sras bcas kyi sku thang dang/ lder tsho rtsis las 'das pa phyag bris dang phyag bzor gnang/.*

[649] *Ibid.*, p. 713 (15a): *dpal rig pa 'dzin pa'i zhal bkod bde chen zhing bkod rje nyid kyi phyag nas lnga tsam zug pa/ dpal rig pa 'dzin pa'i phyag bris mkha' spyod ma'i zhal thang gcig/.* This same source goes on to give a long list of paintings by him and great Karma bka'-brgyud-pa lamas that had been inserted into his great stūpa. It is possible that Si-tu's (or the later dPal-spungs tradition's?) depic-

tions of the Mahāsiddhas, such as the set shown once in the Tibet House, New Delhi, followed in the tradition of Tshe-dbang-nor-bu (who as described elsewhere also composed a written description or *bris yis* of this group of figures following the tradition of Tāranātha).

[650] Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs (1985), p. 87, mentions a set of about thirty thangkas of the Jātakas and a painted depiction of the Sixteen Elders called the "sKya-ra-ma," all in Si-tu's hand. See also Essen and Thingo (1989), nos. I 49, II 205 and II 338.

[651] For example, at Ngom gNas-mdo dgon-pa in Khams in 1918, there was found an excellent set of the *dPag bsam 'khri shing* he designed, in the Karma-sgar-bris style. Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 24.1 (12b): *ri bo che yang dgon pas gnang ba skyes rabs dpag bsam 'khri shing si tu'i bkod pa kar bris bzang nges/.*

[652] See for instance the references collected in V. Reynolds, A. Heller and J. Gyatso (1986), p. 158, n. 5.

[653] Most of his "autobiography" published as *Ta'i si tur* consists of dry, scarcely edited extracts from his diaries. It makes for rather boring reading, but it must be gone through systematically for all its mentions of painters and sacred art.

Chapter 11

Chos-bkra-shis, Karma-bkra-shis and the Kar-shod-pa

Though Tibetan religious art was by nature conservative, none of the styles remained static through the passing of the centuries. By the 18th century, the sGar-bris too had given rise to more than one further development. According to tradition, the three greatest exponents of the sGar-bris style each bore the name "bKra-shis." Subsequent to the school's 16th-century founder, Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis, the two later great artists with the name bKra-shis were Chos-bkra-shis and Kar-shod Karma-bkra-shis.[654] Whereas the founder of the sGar-bris was only known to have lived and worked in Central Tibet (dBus), these next two painters seem to have mainly worked in the eastern province of Khams, where the Karma bka'-brgyud and allied traditions managed to survive the troubles of the mid 17th century and in the 18th century began to regain some measure of their past glory.

Chos-bkra-shis

Chos-bkra-shis flourished in Khams in the first half of the 1700s and was associated, for instance, with the 3rd Khams-sprul Kun-dga'-bstan-'dzin (1680–1728). Quite a large number of thangkas by him were formerly preserved in the gSer-gdung-khang (the temple enshrining the gilt reliquary stūpa) at the Khams-pa-sgar Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs-gling monastery in northwest Khams, including a forty-eight-painting set depicting the bKa'-brgyud-pa lineage designed by the Khams-sprul Kun-dga'-bstan-'dzin, a depiction of the previous embodiments of 'Brug-chen Padma-dkar-po in fifteen thangkas, and a nine-painting set depicting the biography of the same Khams-sprul, one of the most important 'Brug-pa bka'-brgyud masters in Khams.[655] Chos-bkra-shis was a contemporary, colleague and perhaps also student of the great scholar De'u-dmar dge-bshes; it was actually he who asked the latter to compose his great commentary on medicinal substances (completed in 1727).[656]

Kar-shod Karma-bkra-shis and the Kar-shod-pa

The third "bKra-shis" of the tradition, namely Kar-shod Karma-bkra-shis, was probably a generation or two younger than Chos-bkra-shis. He flourished during the lifetime of Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas (1700–1774), and he is said by Smith to have established a painting school in Khams that survived until the 20th century.[657] Karma-bkra-shis was evidently from Kar-shod (sometimes wrongly spelled dKar-shod), an area in northern Chab-mdo in the vicinity of the monastery of Karma. This area was home to a flourishing school of outstanding painters already in the 1720s, and probably even earlier. Si-tu Paṇ-chen in his autobiography mentions meeting "gNam-chos sprul-sku and Karma-bkra-shis" at 'Dzi-sgar in 1740, though I am not sure whether the latter was the painter with this name.[658] ('Dzi-sgar was in 'Jo-mda', the district just east of Karma-dgon and Chab-mdo district,

the main later centers of the Kar-shod-pa.) It is also recorded that Si-tu Paṇ-chen in the year 1755 gave an initiation for the White Amitāyus to a Karma-bkra-shis.[659]

The Kar-shod-pa school is said by Smith to have been much influenced by the personal painting style of the Si-tu Paṇ-chen.[660] This was probably the case for at least some artists from this area; the great artist [Kar-shod] Karma-bkra-shis, for instance, is recorded to have been one of Si-tu's main disciples for art.[661] Certainly Si-tu Paṇ-chen and his followers were great patrons of the artists of Karma. In the two rJe-drung gZim-'khyil chapels at Lha-thog mDzo-rdzi in Khams, one could find in the early 20th century over one hundred Kar-shod-pa paintings, including thirty of the (Karma) bka'-brgyud-pa lineage lamas (*bka' brgyud gser phreng*) and twenty-five thangkas of a set called "bKa' thang." This monastery is said to have been founded by Si-tu Paṇ-chen himself.[662]

The modern Gling-tshang Karma-sgar-bris master Gega Lama seems to indicate that the direct influence of Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas became very prevalent in Nang-chen and sDe-dge districts, whereas Lho Karma-dgon and the district of Chab-mdo in Khams in particular were home to many skillful religious artisans and painters of a special sGar-bris tradition called the "Kar-shod-pa."[663] It may therefore be useful to try to distinguish between (1) the style of works painted by Kar-shod-pa artists under the direct supervision and strong stylistic influence of Si-tu Paṇ-chen and (2) the basic Kar-shod-pa style which existed in its own right both before and after Si-tu. Among the paintings of the Kar-shod school (*kar shod bris*), moreover, subsequent Tibetan connoisseurs could discern works of earlier and later periods.[664] In contrast with these Kar-shod-pa traditions, Si-tu on other occasions seems to have striven for a much simpler, even minimalistic, treatment of the background, which nevertheless also betrays a strong distinctively Chinese touch.

De'u-dmar dge-bshes's Description

The painter Karma-bkra-shis is not mentioned by name by De'u-dmar dge-bshes in his descriptions of styles (ch. 10, vv. 43–45) in the early or mid 1700s, but the "dKar-shod-pa" tradition had been founded in time for him to note it as a new and officially still nameless tradition.[665] The eclectic but very impressive tradition was by then already too important to go unmentioned:

> Nowadays there are some marvelous, outstanding [painting] traditions of predominantly good elements, which do not belong to a single tradition but combine various points from many famous ancient traditions. This tradition lacks an [established traditional] name. (X 43)

> The figures express a feeling of kindness and liveliness. The painting is soft and the tone is rich. The layout is marvelous, and the thickness of shading is a suitable amount. The postures and musculature of the figures are excellent, with variously tensed and relaxed forms. The basic pigments are not many. [The work] is very detailed. (X 44)

> The figures are slightly large while the background realm is somewhat narrow. Other animals are rare, and the landscape is vast. All traditions of art (? *bzo mtha'*) are present. [The composition] is asymmetrical. Such is the contemporary excellent artistic practice of the people of dKar-shod, though I have found no [traditional] name for it. (X 45)

Some Surviving Kar-shod-pa Paintings

One relatively recent Kar-shod-pa painter of note was, according to oral tradition, a certain mGon-po-rdo-rje (fl. early 20th c.?).[666] A set of paintings attributed to him portraying the successive Karma-pas and other masters of the Karma bka'-brgyud Mahāmudrā lineage back to Vajradhara was brought by Sangs-rgyas-mnyan-pa sprul-sku IX bShad-sgrub-bstan-pa'i-nyi-ma (1897–1962) from 'Ban-chen dgon-pa in sGa-pa district of Khams, and it now survives at Rumtek monastery in Sikkim.[667] The line drawings of the successive Karma-pas in Karma Thinley's book thus derive from this later Kar-shod-pa set, which includes the 15th Karma-pa (and thus could not have been painted *in this complete form*, at least, until the 19th century).

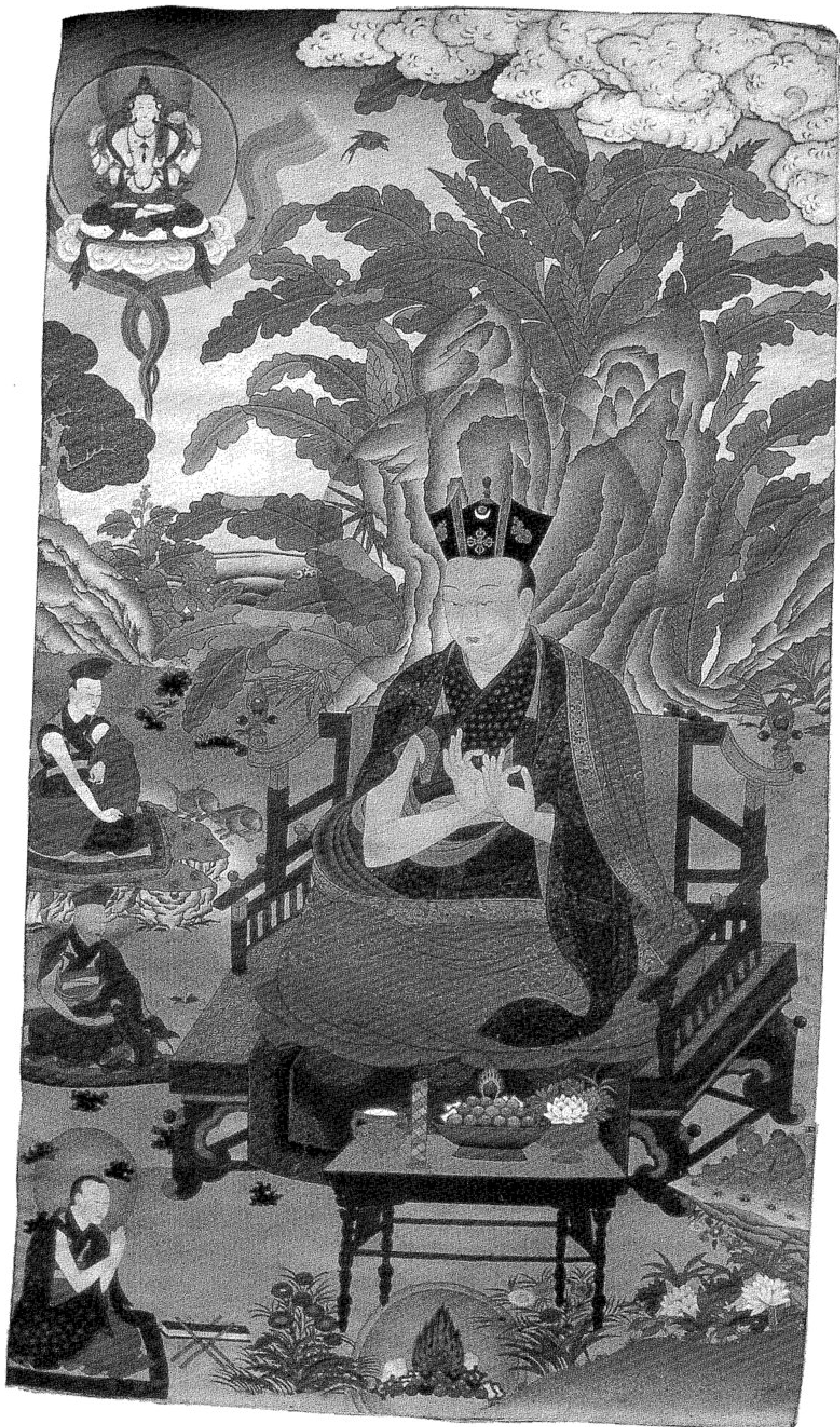


Fig. 148. The Eighth Karma-pa Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje.

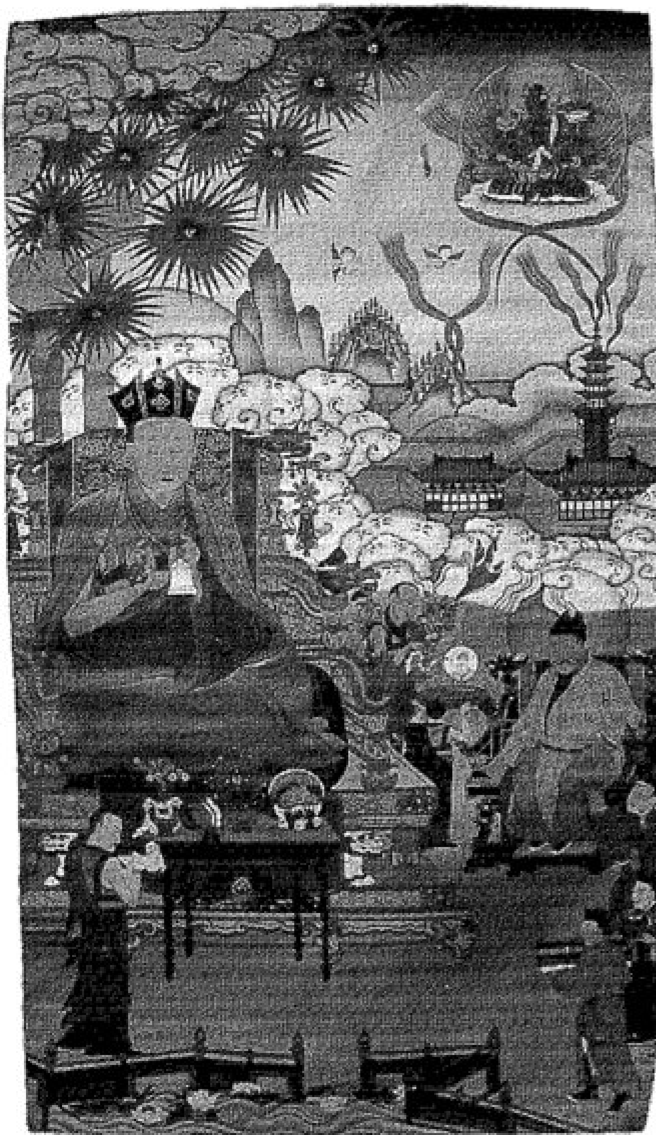


Fig. 149. The Fifth Karma-pa De-bzhin-gshegs-pa.



Fig. 150. The Ninth Karma-pa dBang-phyug-rdo-rje.



Fig. 151. The Tenth Karma-pa Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje.

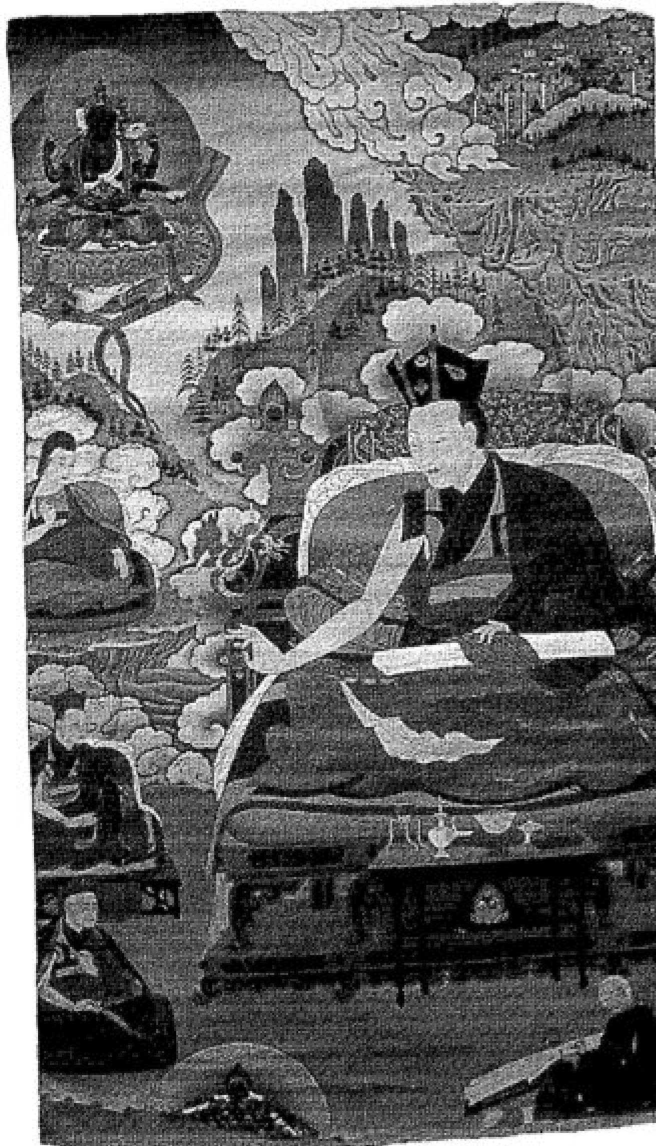


Fig. 152. The Twelth Karma-pa Byang-chub-rdo-rje.

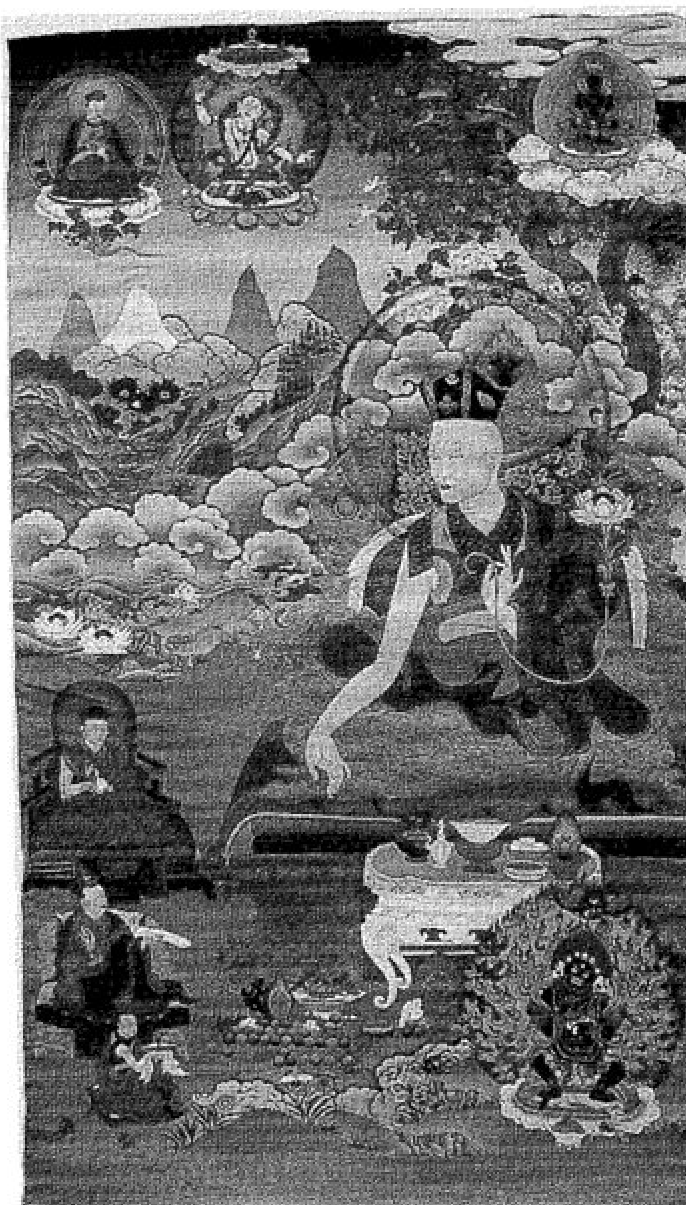


Fig. 153. The Thirteenth Karma-pa bDud-'dul-rdo-rje.

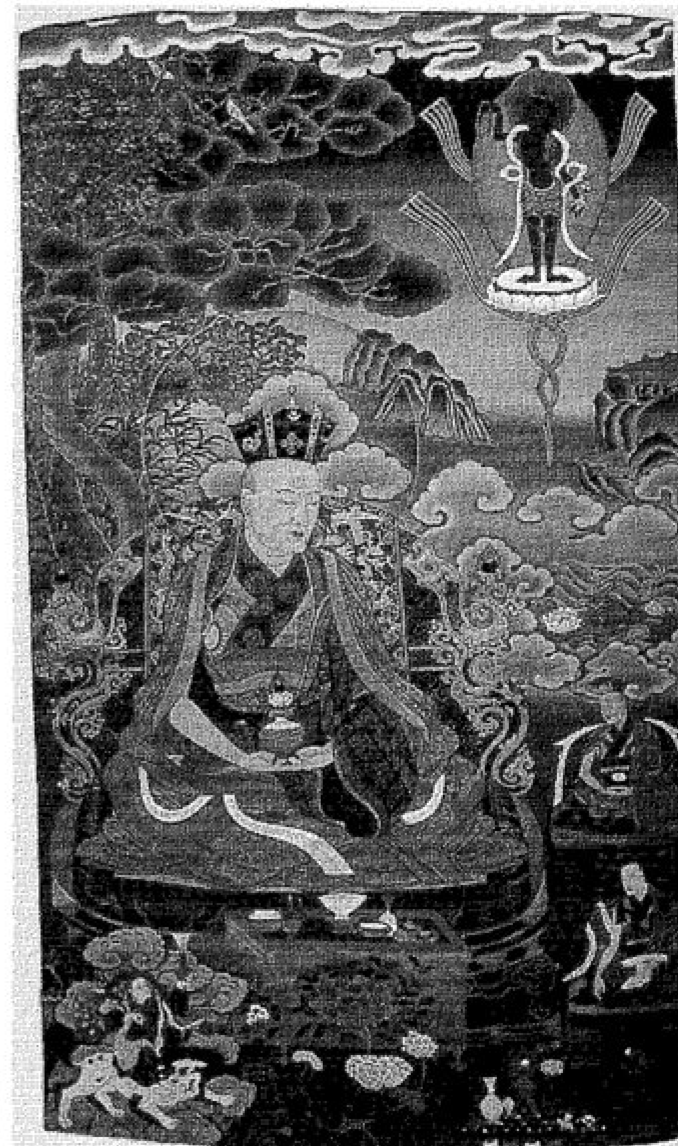


Fig. 154. The Fourteenth Karma-pa Theg-mchog-rdo-rje.

Figs. 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, and 154. The Great Karma-pa Hierarchs. Seven Paintings from a later Kar-shod-pa set depicting lineage masters of the Karma bKa'-brgyud-pa tradition. Copies of dPal-spungs originals by the Kar-shod-pa painter mGon-po-rdo-rje (fl. ca. 1900). Originals photographed in Rumtek. Photographic prints courtesy of Burkhard Quessel.

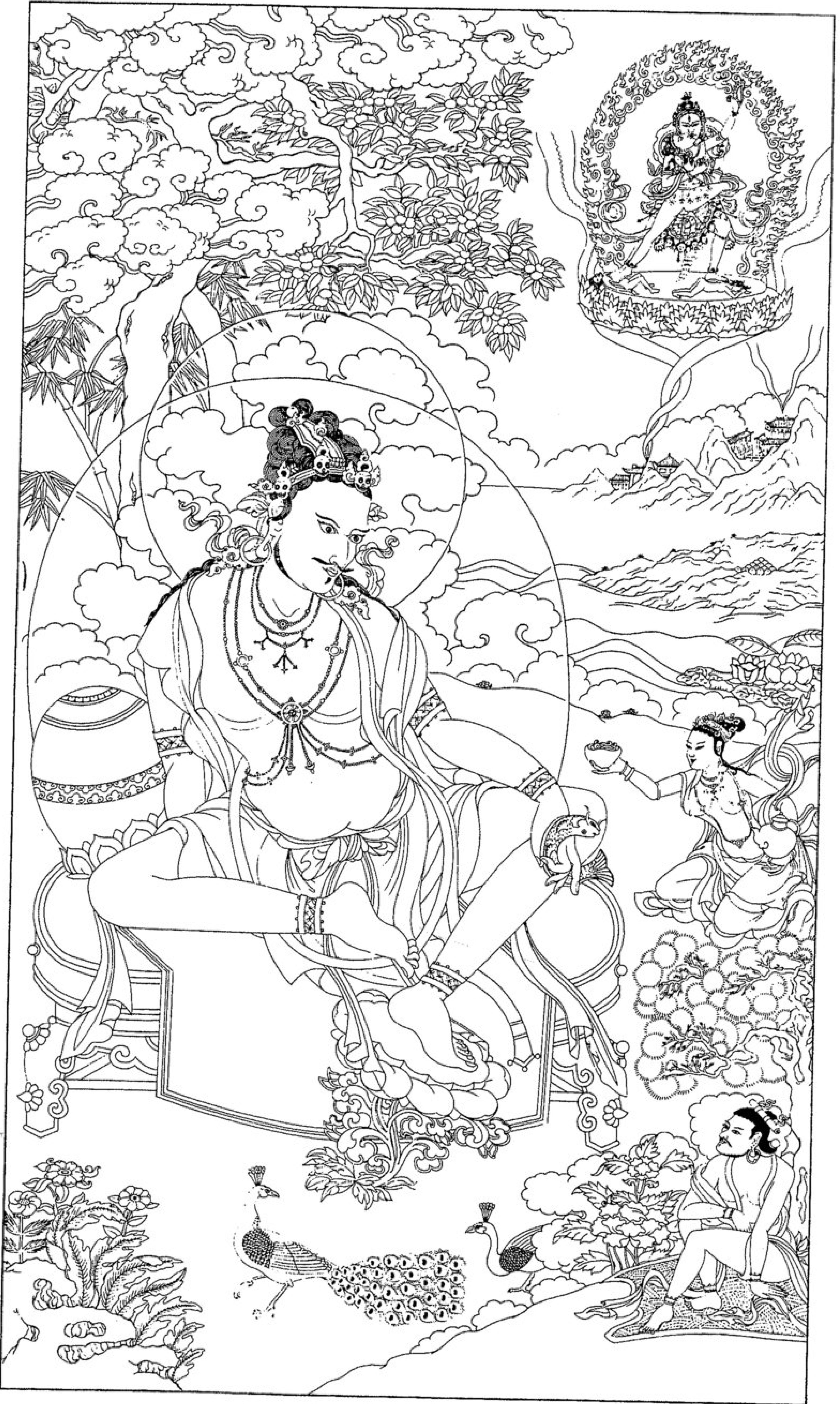


Fig. 155. Tilopa, the Indian Mahāsiddha. A modern redrawing of a Kar-shod-pa composition, after Karma Thinley (1980), p. 20.

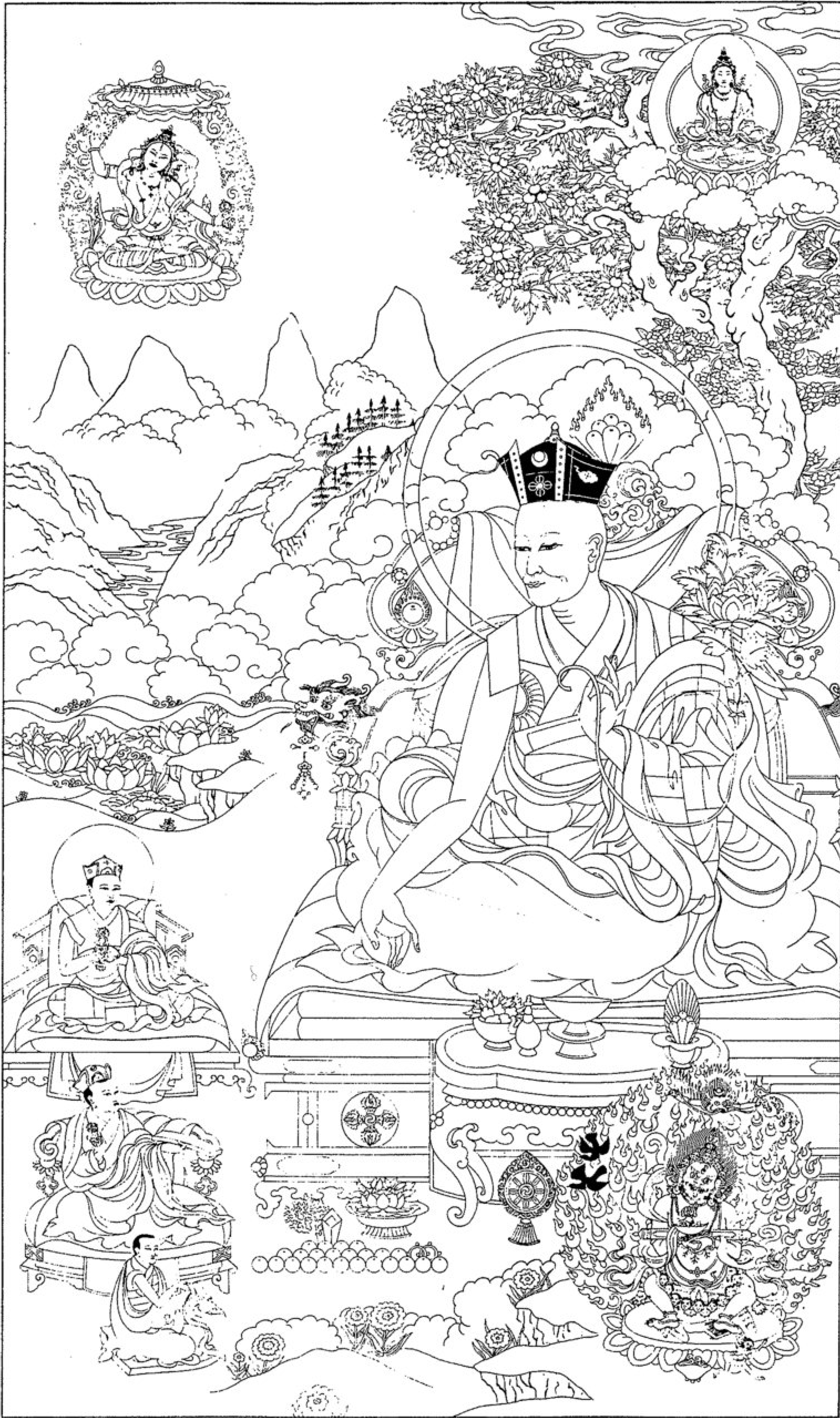
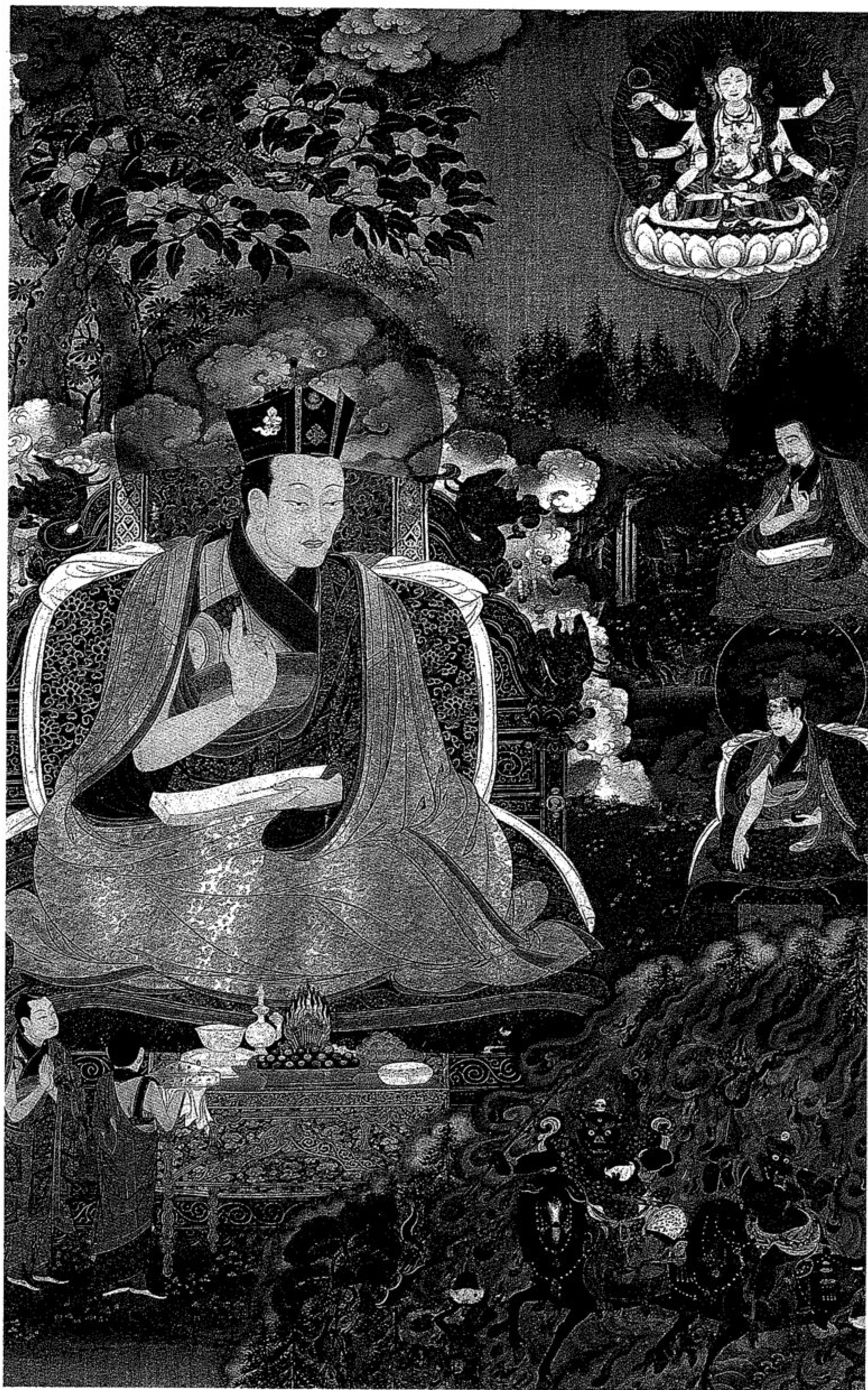


Fig. 156. The 13th Karma-pa bDud-'dul-rdo-rje. A modern redrawing of a Kar-shod-pa composition, after Karma Thinley (1980), p. 116. Note that one figure is missing in the sky (cf. Figs. 153 and 157).



Fig. 157. The 13th Karma-pa bDud-'dul-rdo-rje (1733-1797). Thangka, ca. late 18th c., 98 x 59 cm. Rolf and Helen von Büren collection. Identified by an inscription as the work of a painter called "Manggalaṃ," probably an important Kar-shod-pa artist named bKra-shis (Karma-bkra-shis?) who flourished in the mid-1700s or later.



Pl. 61. Zhwa-dmar Karma-pa (possibly the 4th, Chos-kyi-grags-pa, 1453–1524). Thangka, late 18th or 19th century?, 98 × 60 cm. From a set depicting the guru lineage of the Karma bKa'-brgyud Mahāmudrā, based on an 18th-century dPal-spungs original. Published in G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 143 (I 86, II 147). The main figure holds the Zab mo nang don, while his disciple in the background, right, the [1st] Karma-phrin-las-pa (1456–1539), holds a commentary on the Abhisamayālaṃkāra.



Pl. 62. One of the Zhwa-dmar Karma-pas (possibly the 6th, Gar-dbang Chos-kyi-dbang-phug, 1584–1630). A painting from the Kar-shod-pa tradition, probably from the same series as the depiction of the 13th Karma-pa signed by the artist "Manggalam." Thangka, Khams, ca. late 18th c., 98 × 59 cm. Rolf and Helen von Büren collection.

One exquisite rendering of this set exists (Fig. 157) that includes a depiction of the 13th Karma-pa bDud-'dul-rdo-rje (1733–1797).[668] This particular exemplar of the set must then date to no earlier than about the second half of the 18th century. Interestingly, this beautiful portrait of bDud-'dul-rdo-rje bears an inscription in golden letters (barely noticeable in the landscape) which states that the painter of the work was named "Maṅga" [=bKra-shis].[669] Perhaps then this particular exemplar of the established set was the work of Kar-shod Karma-bkra-shis, or if not, then at least it was the work of still another subsequent and as yet unknown painter from the Kar-shod tradition who also had the very common name bKra-shis, though only the greatest masters would normally "sign" their works. Well informed recent Karma bka'-brgyud masters such as bsTan-dga' Rin-po-che (of 'Ban-chen monastery in sGa-pa) maintain that the earliest prototype for this particular series was designed by Si-tu Paṇ-chen, the great patron, teacher and collaborator of Kar-shod Karma-bkra-shis. Si-tu is said to have had these thangkas painted with the assistance of Kar-shod-pa painters.[670] This too would certainly not rule out Kar-shod Karma-bkra-shis as the painter of this work, though here the artist seems to have been working in a more typical Kar-shod-pa style.

In sum, it seems that the Kar-shod-pa tradition proper from the beginning had incorporated not only strong sGar-bris influences, but also substantial elements from the Old and New sMan-ris. (Probably the artists also had direct access to many Chinese models.) In the above-mentioned series of paintings in this style, the central figures were relatively larger in relation to the overall size of the composition. The main figures were often portrayed in partial profile, and much of the background was filled with ornate and very detailed elements from Chinese landscape painting. In other words, the style corresponds fairly accurately to the 18th-century written description of it by De'u-dmar dge-bshes.[671]

Notes

[654] Kong-sprul, pt. 1, p. 572.4–5 (*oṃ* 209a).

[655] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 8.1–3 (4b): *gser gdung khang du rjes kun dga' bstan 'dzin zhal bkod kyi rgyas stod lha bzo chos bkras bris pa'i bka' brgyud gser phreng khyad 'phags zhal thang 48/ .... pad dkar skye phreng chos bkras bzhengs pa phun tshogs pa'i zhal thang grwa tshar 15 .... chos bkras bris pa'i kun dga' bstan 'dzin rnam thar 'byung gzugs chu zla'i rol gar thang shar 9/*. In the first citation he is called "*rgyes stod lha bzo chos bkras*," which may identify his native place as having been rGyes-stod. However, as will be seen below, one source gives his native place as rDza-stod. Both rDza-stod and rGyes-stod would be conceivable scribal errors for rJes-stod. The latter was home to the famous painter rJe-stod Tshe-dbang-grags-pa, who flourished a few decades later.

[656] De'u-dmar dge-bshes, *bDud nad gzhoms*, p. 512, mentions rDza-stod Lha-chen-pa Dharma-manggalam (Chos-bkra-shis) as the one who originally requested him to write his famous *Shel phreng* treatise on pharmacognosy, which he finished in 1727 (me lug): *snga nas bzo sprul mchog gi yang rtser son pa/ rdza stod lha chen pa dharma manggalas nan bskul gnang bar mgo brtsams par g.yeng bas lo shas lus la/....*

[657] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 45, n. 80.

[658] Si-tu, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 192.7.

[659] Si-tu and Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 562. Below there are other references (p. 576, ca. 1758) and (p. 577.7, 1759) to a "bla-ma Karma-bkra-shis" (another person?) associated with Rag-chag monastery or the Rag-chab people.

[660] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 45, n. 80.

[661] Si-tu and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 638.2 (*na* 318b).

[662] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 11.5 (6a).

[663] Gega Lama (1983), vol. 1, p. 36: *'di'i rgyun bod nang chen phyogs dang sde dge'i yul la khyab/ lhag par lho karma dgon chen dang/ chab mdo'i phyogs su kar shod pa zhes lha mgar dang/ lha bris mkhas pa mang zhing/ de dag gis kyang phal cher sgar bris kyi srol kho nar bzung/*.

[664] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 489.3 (245a), at Tre'o gzims-sbug sGrol-ma lha-khang: *dpag bsam 'khri shing kar shod bris gsar rnying gnyis/*. And in the Chu-khar Tshe-dpag lha-khang he saw an excellent nine-thangka set depicting the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava (p. 489.3): *...kar shod mtshan brgyad dgu thang bris legs/*.

[665] De'u-dmar dge-bshes, *Kun gsal tshon*, ff. 26b-27a.

[666] According to Tenga Rinpoche, Swayambhunath, March 1995, Kar-shod mGon-po-rdo-rje flourished to-

ward the end of the 15th Karma-pa's life. mGon-po-rdo-rje was assisted in large projects by many helpers. His uncle and teacher was, moreover, the Kar-shod-pa Padma-rab-brtan. A Kar-shod-pa painter with the name Padma-rab-brtan is also mentioned by Gega Lama (1983), vol. 1, p. 36, as a teacher of Thang-bla-tshe-dbang (b. 1902). Previously the painter mGon-po-rdo-rje has been wrongly dated to a much earlier period. P. Pal (1984), p. 155, for instance, mentioned a surviving thangka of the Karma-pa De-bzhin-gshegs-pa by a "Karshu Gonpo Dorje" (=Kar-shod mGon-po-rdo-rje), and stated that the painting was known to have been painted in the late 17th or early 18th century, though without giving any source for this identification. See also Huntington (1985), pp. 52 and 58, who accepted that as "well documented." Essen and Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 142, similarly state regarding the painter of one of a group of three such paintings (nos. I 86–88): "Der Name des Malers ist überliefert; es handelt sich um Karshu Gönpo Dorje (dkar śu mgon po rdo rje). Er war ein Zeitgenosse des VIII. Sharmapa und Meditationsmeister seines Ordens." But they do not specify how this name has been handed down, nor have I been able yet to find any mention of such a Kar-shod-pa mGon-po-rdo-rje as a meditation master of the Karma bKa-brgyud-pa in the period of the 8th Zhwa-dmar Chos-kyi-don-grub (1695–1732). Probably all paintings of this set date from the late 18th century or later.

[667] According to Tenga Rinpoche, 1995, Sangs-rgyas-mnyan-pa sprul-sku, the brother of Dil-mgo mKhyen-brtse Rin-po-che, offered this later set by mGon-po-rdo-rje to the 16th Karma-pa. This set was a careful copy of a famous set at dPal-spungs dating to Si-tu Paṇ-chen's time. See also Karma Thinley (1980), p. ix: "Namkha Tashi (Christopher Banigan) did the illustrations, after the most famous paintings of the Kagyu lineage, the work of Karshu Gonpo Dorje, brought by Sangye Nyenpa Rinpoche from Khams as a gift to the sixteenth Karmapa." The artists used to trace the compositions of famous originals onto very fine paper, which were used for producing further painted copies.

[668] According to Gega Lama, Bodhnath, March 1995, by now there are forty-six or forty-seven thangkas in this complete *bKa' brgyud gser phreng* set. The *Kar rabs* set of thangkas were paintings showing only the successive rebirth of the Karmapas, now a set of sixteen. Great sets of many large and sumptuous paintings such as of the above lineages or of the *dPag bsam 'khri shing* could, of course, only be afforded by a great lama or rich patron.

[669] Inscription: *ri mo'i byed po mang ga'i ming//* ("The painter was named Maṅga."). Here Maṅga is no doubt short for Maṅgala (Tib. bKra-shis). I am indebted to Ms. Eugenia Gajardo in Singapore for arranging for me to see this thangka, now in the possession of Rolf and Helen von Büren, and for help in arranging a photograph of it.

[670] bsTan-dga' Rin-po-che, oral communication, Germany, July 1994, and Swayambhunath, March 1995. According to him, the minor human figures in these gSer phreng paintings are main disciples of the chief central figure (*gtso bo*), and also depicted are his main yid-dam and chos-skyong. He asserts that there also existed a brief written description (*bris yig*) for this set (supposedly by Si-tu), but it was not included in the latter's collected works. Thrangu Rinpoche, March 1995, Bodhnath, similarly reported that the original paintings in this set were in dPal-spungs and were commissioned by Si-tu Paṇ-chen. The latter is said to have played a role in sketching the trees and the rocks in the landscape. (This is said to be mentioned in Si-tu's autobiography, though I have yet to locate the passage.) The artists call the old set of *bKa' brgyud gser phreng* thangkas the *brGyud rgan ma* (here *rgan* means *chen po* "big"). The Kar-shod-pa artists are still active in Khams in the Karma-dgon area, according to Thrangu Rinpoche.

[671] According to Tenga Rinpoche, Swayambhunath, March 1995, Kar-shod-pa artists used to take about three years to finish one thangka. "Enough time would elapse to hear the cuckoo sing thrice (in three consecutive springs)." Mostly they painted in the summer. They would set aside a little time each day to work on a special thangka—when they were feeling their best. Shading (*mdangs*) was very important and time consuming. By painting a few minutes every day, they would let the painting slowly develop. In addition to their excellent painters, some Kar-shod-pa artists were metal workers.

Chapter 12

Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen of lDan-ma

A great exponent of sMan-thang-pa's tradition both theoretically and practically in 18th-century Khams—during the same period as Si-tu Paṇ-chen—was Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen (1697–1774). He is actually better known in Tibetan history for his work at Derge in the 1730s and 1740s as chief redactor of the printing blocks for the huge Tanjur canonical collection, as well as for lesser publications such as the *Sa skya bka' 'bum* ("Collected Works of the Sa-skya Founders") in sixteen volumes. Yet his activities in the realm of religious art were also very significant, and it is no mere coincidence that they too were pursued mainly during the period of great cultural efflorescence in Khams that came into being through the patronage of the Derge king bsTan-pa-tshe-ring.



Fig. 158. Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen. Xylograph. From his Collected Works, vol. 6, p. 2.

The Zhu-chen ("Great Editor"), a native of Khams lDan-ma, describes his own artistic activities in some detail in his autobiography.[672] He had grown up in a family of religious artists who, as mentioned above, had included in an earlier generation the great painter Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang (fl. mid 16th c.) and the latter's nephew, the monk dGe-'dun-'od-zer. In the 17th century the same family produced the artist lha-bzo Blo-gros-rgya-mtsho and his nephew Karma-rgya-mtsho. Due to some disagreement with his uncle, the latter split off and established his own separate household. His nephews included the monk Sangs-rgyas-bsod-nams, who served at Sa-skar monastery for many years as chant-leader (*dbu mdzad*), and also the painter Legs-bshad-kun-dga'-'phel, otherwise known as lha-bzo Ngag-dbang-chos-'phel, who was the father of Tshul-khrims-rin-chen.[673]

Youthful Studies

As a boy, Tshul-khrims-rin-chen had been dedicated to the monkhood by his parents, but before beginning his monastic studies he learned painting from his father. At first, even before he had learned to read, he helped his father paint in a certain new temple, where he participated as best he could in the painting of the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava (*gu ru mtshan brgyad*), a theme chosen by his father because of his liking for the rNying-ma-pa. He also helped paint some other deities of his father's own preference (*'dod*

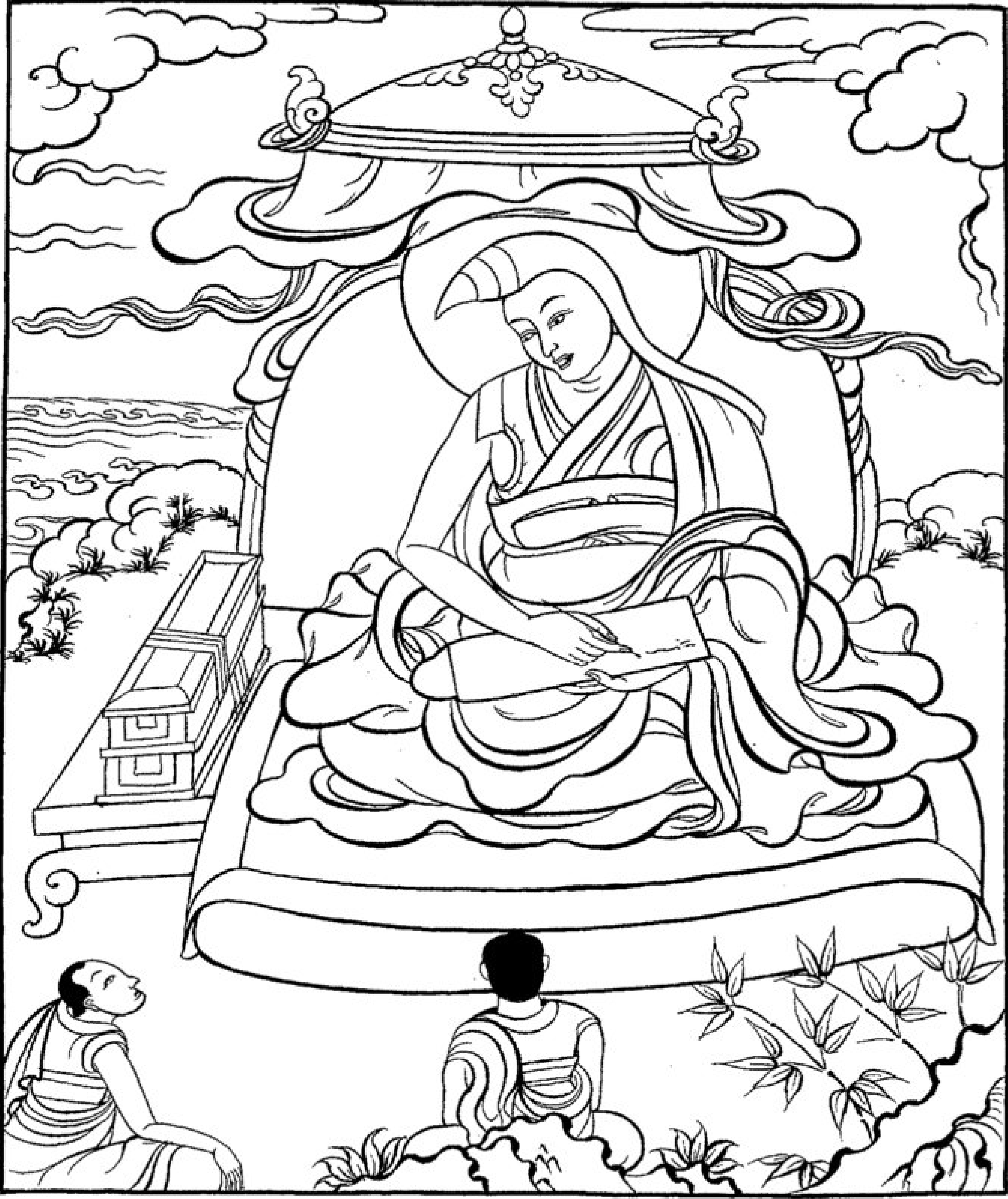


Fig. 159. Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen. Drawing by the contemporary Tibetan artist Mig-dmar, Dharamsala, India.

lha). When assisting in the painting of some ornamental inscriptions bordering the murals, he also learned the Indian *lañcana* script, which he later studied further by looking through sample scripts he found in a sketchbook among example drawings of deities (*lha dpe*).[674]

The system of divine proportions he first learned was the one that had been handed down to him as family tradition (a tradition perhaps influenced by the iconometric writings of the 8th Karma-pa). Later, as a more mature student, Tshul-khrims-rin-chen became keenly interested in establishing a sound canonical basis for the proportions of sacred images. Therefore, together with the learned teacher Sangs-rgyas-chos-'phel, he studied the treatises of five great Tibetan authorities: (1) sMan-thang-pa, (2) 'Phreng-kha-ba, (3) Bu-ston, (4) sTag-tshang lo-tsā-ba and (5) Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang. Later still he studied passages of yet another treatise, the *Bai ḍū rya g.ya' sel* of sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, a partly polemical work that grew out of the sDe-srid's earlier treatise on calendar calculation, astrology and related subjects, the *Bai ḍū rya dkar po*.

Following careful study of all the above, Zhu-chen concluded that sMan-bla-don-grub's treatise could be accepted as a reliable and standard source.[675] He rejected in particular a gloss (*mchan bu*) found in the work of 'Phreng-kha-ba to the effect that paintings of Buddhas could measure 120 finger-widths. He also rejected the tradition propounded by sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho.

Zhu-chen's appeals to the Indian canonical sources and careful comparisons of Tibetan tradi-

tions apparently did not have convincing force for some of the artists working within the influential Central Tibetan (especially Lhasa?) tradition described by the sDe-srid.[676] The Venerable Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes, the current senior painting master at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala, informed me that the sDe-srid's system had been later vigorously defended against such criticisms by a scholar of their own tradition (perhaps by Zhu-chen's contemporary from eastern Tibet, A-kyā Blo-bzang-bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan, b. ca. 1708).[677] However, I have not yet been able to document this discussion further, and in any case nobody can deny that the sDe-srid's system represents a significant departure from sMan-thang-pa and Phreng-kha-ba's iconometric traditions, a departure evidently based on traditions of actual practice and not on written sources.[678] It contradicts furthermore the statements of no less a personage than the sDe-srid's main teacher, the 5th Dalai Lama, who referred to this question in his treatise *rTsis dkar nag*, the work in his oeuvre most closely resembling the *Bai ḍū rya g.ya' sel*. The Great Fifth stated here clearly and emphatically that in the writings of sMan-bla-don-grub and his successor Ri-mkhar-ba, as well as in their practice, there are never any cases to be found where they gave the height of a Tathāgatha's body as other than 125 finger-widths (*sor mo*).[679]

Among the painting projects Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen undertook as a young monk before he became famous for his learning, one took place in the late 1720s at Rag-chu rNam-rgyal-dgon in lDan-ma. It was the painting of the murals of a two-pillar temple erected by a certain A-dran dge-slong Phrin-las-phun-tshogs. Here Tshul-khrims-rin-chen and his colleagues portrayed on the wall the Hundred Jātakas and the Twelve Great Deeds of the Buddha. Tshul-



Fig. 160. Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen with an abbot of Ngor. Detail of thangka. Collection R.R.E. Shown on the bottom right is Zhu-chen supervising the Lha-dga' brothers and their assistants, while they painted a set of the dPag bsam 'khri shing for the Ngor abbot Rin-chen-mi-'gyur-rgyal-mtshan. Detail of Pl. 63.

khrims-rin-chen both supervised the project and worked with the other artists, who included the gZhi-ru lha-ris-pa dGe-'dun-rgya-mtsho and his nephew, a certain artist from sGa-stod, and the lha-bzo Tshe-ring-bsam-grub of Karma mDa'-nag.[680]

A short while later he used a holy cloth (associated with the deceased Ngor-pa master bsTan-'dzin-lhun-grub) as the support for a black thangka (*nag thang*) with Mahākāla mGon-po-gur as the main figure, surrounded by several other lamas and deities. This he afterwards gave to blama Sangs-rgyas-dpal-bzang because the latter liked it so much.[681]

Mature Works and Projects

Within a few years, Tshul-khrims-rin-chen attained great fame at the Derge court through his skills in other fields, particularly in the language arts such as grammar and poetics. He was a great devotee of Sarasvatī (dByangs-can-ma), the patron-goddess of Sanskrit poetics, grammar and similar branches of learning.

He was appointed to edit a printed edition of the collected works of the Five Founding Masters of Sa-skya (*Sa skya bka' 'bum*) in sixteen long-format volumes, a project which was sponsored by the Derge king bsTan-pa-tshe-ring and which reached completion in 1736.[682] Also carved on these blocks were the images of numerous "head-" or "front-deities" (*dbu lha*; =*le lha*), all drawn by a single artist. The artist was a skilled draftsman and was no doubt one of the top artists active in Derge in the 1730s.[683] It is a pity that his name has not been handed down by the sources. Though in some respects his style resembles that of sMad-shod A-'phel who drew the corresponding images for the Derge Tanjur, he seems to have been another painter (as one can see for instance from his different treatment of tree branches).



Fig. 161. King bsTan-pa-tshe-ring of Derge, main patron of the Derge Sa skya bka' 'bum edition. From the Sa skya bka' 'bum, Derge edition (1736), vol. ba, fol. 409b.

Soon after finishing this large printing project, Tshul-khrims-rin-chen painted a one-day thangka (*nyin thang*) of rDo-rje-tshe for his own longevity, in conjunction with related ritual practices.[684]

Then a few years later, Tshul-khrims-rin-chen went on to head the editing of the Derge edition of the Tanjur and thereby gained the title of "Zhu-chen."[685] On the first pages of each volume of this edition there appear illustrations of Buddhas, deities and other such figures. They were drawn by an outstanding artist whom Zhu-chen in his Tanjur catalogue describes as "A-'phel, an upholder of the swastika Bon vehicle, an artist expert in turning all compounded things of appearance and existence into the path of pictures, like a second sMan-thang-pa or mKhyen-brtse."[686]

The work of carving and correcting the blocks came to an end in 1744. Then around 1745 Tshul-khrims-rin-chen was called by the Derge king to participate in the painting of the great temple recently built at the dGon-chen to accommodate the new wooden printing blocks of the Tanjur. Since Zhu-chen had been so intimately involved with the block-carving project, he was summoned to help with its continuation in this form too, being told to paint the main Buddha figure of the murals. This he did, showing the Buddha in the gesture (mudrā) of subduing Māra. The rest of the twenty-seven mural areas (*zhing khams*) were done by many expert painters from dPal-yul and Karma Lha-steng-pa.

Fig. 162

Figs. 162, 163, 164. Siddhas and other figures. From the 1736 Derge edition of the Sa skya bka' 'bum.

Fig. 163

Fig. 164



Fig. 165

Figs. 165, 166, 167. Buddhas, saints and other figures. From the 1744 Derge edition of the Tanjur, originals drawn by sMad-shod A-'phel. Published in J. Kolmaś (1978).













Fig. 166













Fig. 167

The sDe-dge sa-skyong bla-ma Phun-tshogs-bstan-pa had gained by then through his patronage of various projects a good secondhand familiarity with the production of religious art ("as if he had studied it from afar"), and he himself took a close interest in planning and overseeing the painting work. Zhu-chen worked under him, supervising the work in detail. Although this was a very large project, they were able to complete it without major mistake or mishap.[687]

It was in connection with the construction and completion of this temple that Zhu-chen also wrote his description and record (*dkar chag*) entitled *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung...*, which contains a brief history of the great early painters such as sMan-thang-pa and mKhyen-brtse, as described above in Part I. Here the description of the painters at work is slightly more detailed, mentioning as it does the two chief artists—A-'phel from sMad-shod (near Derge, to the southeast) and Lha-dga' of Karma—who worked with many painters from dPal-yul, mKhar-mdo and Karma Lha-steng-pa.[688] A-'phel, as we know, was the Bon-po artist who drew the "front-deities" (*dbu lha*) for the same Derge Tanjur blocks. Zhu-chen goes on to give quite detailed descriptions of the murals, mentioning for instance that the depiction of the Eighty Great Adepts (*grub thob chen po brgyad cu*) was based on the praises composed by the Indian master "bla-ma rDo-rje-gdan-pa."[689] Here twelve adepts (*mahāsiddhas*) were depicted as larger main figures, and the rest were arranged around them in groups of six smaller figures.[690] He also mentions the verses of praise he composed in connection with the depictions of the life story of the great adept Virūpa.[691]

Another interesting event in his autobiography in connection with painting occurred in the early 1750s when the Ngor mkhan-po dPal-ldan-chos-skyong (1702–1769, 34th abbot of Ngor) was in Derge. The latter, as already mentioned above in connection with Si-tu Paṇ-chen, summoned the painter Lha-dga' of Karma Lha-steng and his brother, and ordered them to execute a set of the *dPag bsam 'khri shing* Avadāna cycle following an original planned by Si-tu Chos-kyi-'byung-gnas, seemingly in twenty thangkas. Though the paint-



Fig. 168. Ngor mkhan-po bKra-shis-lhun-grub, one of the chief religious teachers of bsTan-pa-tshe-ring. Drawn by sMad-shod A-'phel, xylograph from the Derge edition of the Tanjur (1744), vol. 309, f. 355a, left.



Fig. 169. King bsTan-pa-tshe-ring of Derge, main patron of the Derge Tanjur. Drawn by sMad-shod A-'phel, xylograph from the Derge edition of the Tanjur (1744), vol. 309, f. 355a, right.



Fig. 170. Ngor mkhan-po dPal-ldan-chos-skyong. Drawn by sMad-shod A-'phel, xylograph from the Derge edition of the Tanjur (1744), vol. 309, f. 356a, left.



Fig. 171. Kun-dga'-phrin-las-rgya-mtsho of Derge. Drawn by sMad-shod A-'phel, xylograph from the Derge edition of the Tanjur (1744), vol. 309, f. 356a, right.

ers were for the most part to take that earlier set for their model, he ordered Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen to supervise and instruct the artists regarding points they could improve in their execution of the pictures. This project Zhu-chen carried through energetically to a very positive conclusion.[692]

These examples show what a very keen interest was being taken in art in this period by the learned lamas and noble patrons, even regarding the depiction of what otherwise might be thought of as standard subjects. There is no sense here of idle, slavish imitation of received models. These activities may also reflect in part how the patrons and lamas in Derge were then asserting themselves as a center of religious culture independent of the great courts of Lhasa and Tashilhunpo. It is probably no coincidence that these projects overseen by both Si-tu and Zhu-chen just slightly preceded or followed the parallel ones at the great gTsang printery of Narthang, both in the field of canonical printing and iconographical models.[693] Some degree of regional and religious rivalry was no doubt at work, especially among the great patrons.

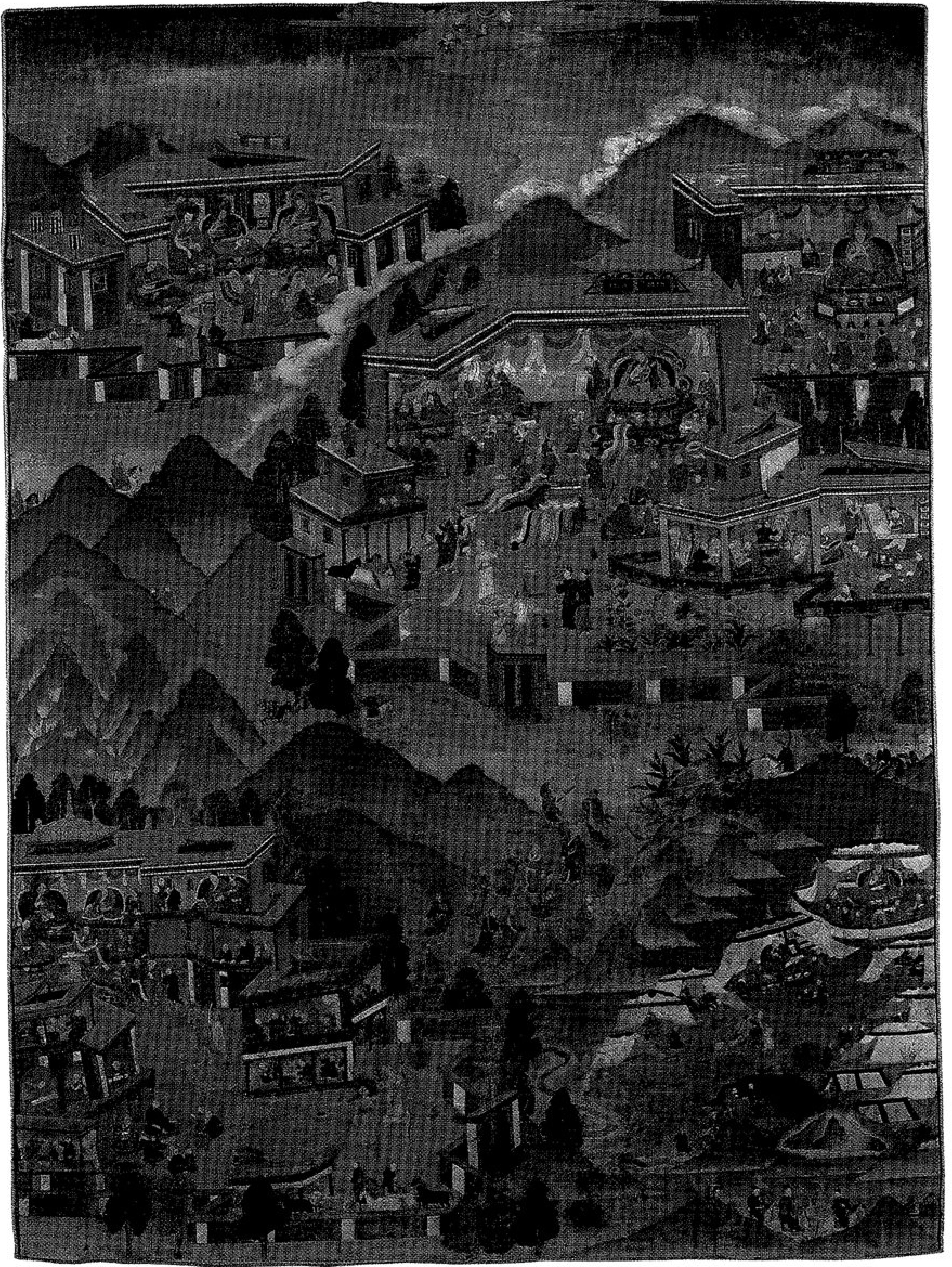
It is also interesting to note that Zhu-chen's collaboration with Lha-dga' and his brother is recorded in an extant narrative thangka, which seems to have episodes from the life of the 18th-century Ngor Abbot, Rin-chen-mi-'gyur-rgyal-mtshan (b. 1717) as its main subject.[694] Rin-chen-mi-'gyur-rgyal-mtshan belonged to the Klu-sdings bla-brang of Ngor and served as 37th abbot from 1746 to 1751. If the above identification is accurate, then Zhu-chen must have collaborated more than once on paintings of this set, and this second reference remains to be found in his autobiography.

Still other similar projects are mentioned in connection with paintings of the Jātakas stories. Once, for example, he borrowed from Tshe-bhruṃ-pa as authoritative models some previously prepared examples drawn on paper of the lives of the Sixteen Elders and the so-called "Hundred Jātaka" (*sKyes rabs brgya rtsa*) collection which was made up of the sixty-seven Jātaka stories composed by Karma-pa Rang-byung-rdo-rje and the thirty-four from the *Jātakamālā* of Ācārya Āryaśūra.[695] These Tshul-khrims-rin-chen took as his main basis for planning a set of Jātaka illustrations, though he made some slight changes to make the illustrations correspond more closely to the written texts. He also added the figures of Dharmatāla and Ha-shang to the group of the Sixteen Elders. The results were outstanding.[696]

This project seems to have been paralleled by one sponsored by the Ngor mkhan-po dPal-ldan-chos-skyong at Derge in 1753. The latter summoned the artist (*lha pa*) bsTan-skyong and ten others, and had them paint a set of thangkas depicting the Jātaka cycle of Āryaśūra with the additions by Rang-byung-rdo-rje, beginning with the story of how the Bodhisattva gave his body to the starving tigress.[697]

Later in Zhu-chen's autobiography, in a passage referring to events a few years later, one finds mentioned a set of thangkas again illustrating the *dPag bsam 'khri shing* stories, a set planned by Zhu-chen and painted (?) in lDan-shod by his attendant Lhun-grub-phun-tshogs. It was taken by the master printing-block carver (*par dpon*) Tshul-khrims-ting-'dzin, who offered a printed set of the Kanjur in return.[698] A number of unusual, miraculous signs accompanied the transfer of the paintings to their new place of enshrinement.

In 1751–52 the Zhu-chen participated at the lDan chos-sde monastery in the renovation of the old and decrepit temples there. High officials of



Pl. 63. Episodes from the life of the Ngor abbot Rin-chen-mi-'gyur-rgyal-mtshan (b. 1717). Thangka, ca. late 18th c., Khams, 79 x 58.5 cm. Collection R.R.E. Published: G. Béguin et al. (1977), no. 276. Detail at center, right margin, shows Zhu-chen supervising a team of artists. See also Fig. 160.

Derge feared that if something went wrong with this Derge-sponsored project in lDan-ma, there would later be some accusations leveled at those involved. So the great Derge patrons appointed the Lha-dga' brothers as the main artists and Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen as overseer of all art work. Late in the fourth lunar month of 1752, after the old temples had been knocked down (following the special rituals and procedures for such renovations) and new buildings had been erected in their place, Zhu-chen began his work as chief supervisor in charge of the planning and checking of all statues and painting work. One of the main artists present was the lha-dpon Tshe-dbang-rig-'dzin of Karma Lha-steng-pa, who was accompanied by his disciples. The chief sculptor was Tshe-brtan of E (or g.Ye) in dBus province, who executed the statues of the Sixteen Elders. Two head painters for the murals (*logs bris kyi dbu pa*) were then appointed: the above-mentioned master Lha-dga' of Lha-stengs and also Ye-shes-blo-gros of the sDe-dgon (i.e. of lDan chos-sde itself?). They supervised the available artists from lDan-ma as well as a group of Kar-shod-pa painters, altogether a group which included twenty artists who executed drawings (*ri mo ba*), twenty-one who shaded, twenty-three who applied plain coats of colors and mixed paints, and so forth.[699]

Then around 1758 he met the Ngor mkhan-po dPal-ldan-chos-skyong at Derge shortly before the latter's death. The great abbot asked him to do the charcoal sketch for a thangka he was then commissioning.

Another painting project Tshul-khrims-rin-chen became involved in (in late 1760?) was the painting of a set of five thangkas depicting his own life, here at the request of his attendant Lhun-grub-phun-tshogs, who had primed several canvases (*ras gzhi*) for that purpose. He was asked to do the sketch (*skya ris*) himself, which he did. The next winter the famed pair from Karma Lha-stengs, Lha-dga' and his brother, did the coloring, shading and outlining, bringing the paintings to completion, and on the night before the work was planned to begin, Lhun-grub-phun-tshogs had an auspicious dream.[700] In connection with these paintings, Tshul-khrims-rin-chen also composed a brief sketch of his life in verses, to serve as the explanatory inscriptions to the paintings.[701]

In 1763 he composed a record of the building and decorating of the dGa'-ldan-rnam-rgyal-gling monastery in lDan-ma. There he writes that the artists working on the murals included the masters lha-bzo-ba dge-slong Ye-shes-blo-gros (mentioned above as from the "sDe-dgon"), Ye-shes-chos-'grub and Sangs-rgyas-rin-chen, all from lDan-ma. These artists were said by Zhu-chen to follow in the Old sMan-ris tradition of the 16th-century master Sangs-rgyas-lha-dbang's great pupil rTa-mgrin-mgon-po, but he added that by that time this tradition had also come under the influence of such sMan-gsar-ba masters as gTsang-pa Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho and "Lho-brag-pa" (Lho-brag sprul-sku Nor-bu-rgya-mtsho or Lho-brag bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu?).[702]

In the next year, 1764, Tshul-khrims-rin-chen composed a similar record of the construction and finishing of the new Ngor-pa monastery Yid-lhung Lha-rgyal-chos-sde founded by the Ngor Klu-sdings abbot Rin-chen-mi-'gyur-rgyal-mtshan (b. 1717, abbatial tenure 1746–51). There he mentions a group of some eighty painters, including the great master lha-dpon Lha-dga' and his brother (from Karma "Lha-ltem," incorrect for: Lha-stengs), and artists from such places as dPal-yul, Chab-mdo and Zla-rgyud.[703] Overseeing the work of the painters were the secretary (*drung yig*) Shākya-chos-'phel, who was a student of Zhu-chen, and lha-dpon Lha-dga'.[704]

Zhu-chen's collected works were also later printed by xylograph at Derge and have thus survived down to the present. These writings too, especially his autobiography and those numerous minor writings having an obvious connection with artistic activities, should be gone through more systematically one day.[705]

Notes

672 Some details about Zhu-chen's artistic career and views on iconometry have already been presented in D. Jackson (1984), p. 145.

673 Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 310 (*ta* 159a).

674 *Ibid.*, p. 331.4 (*ta* 169b).

675 *Ibid.*, p. 348 (*ta* 178a). See also D. Jackson (1984), p. 145.

676 Kong-sprul, pt. 1, p. 573.6 (*oṃ* 209b), specifies this tradition as having become afterward very prevalent: *phyis su rgyugs che ba'i sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho' g.ya' sel....*

677 A-kyā sprul-sku Blo-bzang-bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan wrote a composition on proportions, 19 fols. long, being section 23 (*za*) of his collected works. As listed in L. Chandra ed., *Materials for a History of Tibetan Literature*, pp. 242–3, nos. 4986–4987, it is entitled: *Cha tshad kyi bstan bcos mkhas pa'i 'jug ngogs*. The same details are also listed by L. D. Dagyab (1977), vol. 1, p. 121, no. 51, perhaps from the same source. A-kyā flourished in the mid 1700s, serving at Yung-ho-kung as the sixth "Grand Lama of Peking." He was an exact contemporary of Zhu-chen. On his somewhat polemical stance regarding iconometry, see also E. Lo Bue (1990), p. 197. As I was informed by Mr. Dan Martin, two other related works are said by a recent publication, *gSung 'bum dkar chag*, p. 467, to exist in A-kyā's collected writings: *Lha sku'i cha tshad bde blag tu rtogs par byed pa'i man ngag thig gi rnam gzhag* (16 fols.) and *bDe bar gshegs pa'i mchod rten gyi cha tshad 'grel pa nas gsungs pa* (6 fols.). Peking xylograph editions of these works are available in Berlin. See Manfred Taube (1966), pp. 995f., nos. 2731–2733.

678 Cf. also K. Peterson (1980), p. 243.

679 Dalai Lama V, *rTsis dkar nag*, fol. 7a.4–5: *deng sang lag len gyi skabs/ pir thog dbang po sman bla don grub pas mdzad pa'i cha tshad kyi yi ge chen mo dang/ de'i rjes 'jug dbyangs can lha mos rjes su bzung ba sprul sku ring mkhar ba sogs mkhas pa rnams kyis mdzad pa'i yi ge dang phyag len gyi dkyus su/ de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku la sor brgya nyer lnga 'byung ba de las gzhan pa'i ring thung gi dbye ba mi mdzad cing/.*

680 Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 408.6 (*ta* 208a).

681 *Ibid.*, p. 409 (*ta* 208b).

682 On this edition, see D. Jackson (1987), pp. 232ff.

683 Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 476 (*ta* 242a): *dbu lha'i 'dri mkhan lha ris pa gcig dang/.*

684 *Ibid.*, p. 477 (*ta* 242b): *rdo rje tshe'i ras bris nyin gang gis tshar phyin pa zhig sug bris su bgyis te/.*

685 dPal-ldan-chos-skyong, vol. 2, p. 429.2 (*e* 414a) calls him "the Translator of lDan-ma, Tshul-khrims-rin-chen" (*ldan lo tshul khrims rim chen*), on account of his knowledge of Sanskrit.

686 Zhu-chen, *Kun mkhyen nyi ma'i gnyen gyi bka' lung* (Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1985), p. 564: *de dag gi ri mo'i 'du byed pa ni sman mkhyen gnyis pa bzhin su snang srid kyi dngos po 'du byas pa thams cad ri mo'i lam du 'dren pa la shin tu mkhas pa'i gzugs ris pa g.yung drung bon gyi theg pa 'chang ba a 'phel gyis bris shing/.* These illustrations from the Derge Tanjur have been reproduced in Josef Kolmaś (1978), pp. 164–272.

687 Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 510 (*ta* 259a).

688 Zhu-chen, *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*, p. 160.5 (*a* 80a): *'dir lha ris pa ni/ bzo gnas rig pa'i gtsug lag phreng ba 'dzin pa smad shod a 'phel dang/ karma'i lha dga' sogs/ dpal yul dang/ mkhar mdo dang/ [ka] rma lha steng pa rnams mang po'i nang nas bkra bas te/.*

689 This was the work *Grub thob brgyad cu rtsa bzhi'i gsol 'debs*, no. 4578 in the Peking Tanjur, a brief work of approximately 4 folios in length in this edition. The sequence of the *siddhas* here begins: 1. Klu-sgrub-snying-po, 2. Āryadeva, 3. Lūyipa, 4. Padmavajra, 5. Saraha, 6. mTsho-skyes-rdo-rje, 7. Ḍombiheruka, 8. Virūpa, 9. Bhusukupa, 10. rDo-rje-dril-bu, 11. Nalendrapa, 12. Kukuripa, 13. Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes, 14. Nag-po-rdo-rje, 15. Indrabhūti, 16. Nāropa, and so forth. See Peking Tanjur, pp. 238.4.5ff. (*nu* 326a-). The twenty-three-painting set depicting the *mahāsiddhas*, half of which survive in the Essen collection, also follows this ordering and even quotes the relevant verses of homage under each figure. See G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 2, pp. 71ff. The order of the figures within each set of four should thus be: 1. upper inner figure (i.e. closer to the central figure Vajradhara), 2. lower inner, 3. upper outer, and 4. lower outer. Here the figures face inward, toward Vajradhara. If the 18th-century dating proposed by Essen and Thingo is correct, these paintings were painted approximately contemporaneously with the life of Zhu-chen. The style would seem to be a Khams-pa sMan-ris of this period (i.e. with sGar-bris influence). Cf. M. Rhie and R. Thurman (1991), p. 154, where painting three of this same series (1st painting on the right, relative to the viewer) is also dated to the 18th century and said to be "probably related to the fully developed phase of the Karma Gadri style of Eastern Tibet." In this painting mTsho-skyes-rdo-rje probably figures instead of Nāropa as the 6th siddha in the series.

690 Zhu-chen, *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*, vol. 7, p. 170.5 (*a* 85b). For a related work in his writings, see *Grub brnyes brgyad cu rtsa bzhi la yan lag bdun pa 'bul ba tshogs zung rgya mtsho 'phel ba'i zla 'od*, Collected Writings, vol. 1, pp. 23–27 (*ga* 12a-14a). For a thangka of the *mahāsiddhas* originally belonging to a thirteen-thangka set of this arrangement (six small figs. around a central figure, though *not* in the same precise sequence), see G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 2, p. 78, no. II 163.

[691] Zhu-chen, *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*, p. 172.4 (*a* 86b). For a related written work, see his Collected Works, vol. 1, pp. 71–75 (*ga* 36a-38a): *rNal 'byor dbang phyug bi rū pa'i rtogs brjod las 'phros pa'i bstod pa utpala'i phreng ba.*

[692] Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 514 (*ta* 261a). Note that the set reproduced in *sKyes rabs dpag bsam 'khri shing* is in fact a slightly modified copy in which some of the key scenes (and buildings) are shown a bit larger. I assume that these are later copies and that in Si-tu's originals these scenes were smaller.

[693] Chos-'phel-rdo-rje (1985), p. 40, mentions that Pho-lha-ba bSod-nams-stobs-rgyal founded a "school" of block carving at Shel-dkar (the "*par khang bden bzhi'i chos 'khor*"), which carved the blocks of the "Narthang" Kanjur and Tanjur (the blocks ultimately were kept at Narthang).

[694] Thangka, 18th-c.?, Khams, 79 × 58.5 cm, collection R.R.E. An inscription beneath one scene apparently identifies the main figure as the Klu-sdings abbot Rin-chen-mi-'gyur-rgyal-mtshan: *rgyal ba'i rtogs brjod dpag bsam 'khri shing // yal 'dab tshig brgya brgyad pa'i gzugs bkod rnams// phyag mchod??* [illegible] *rten? bskrun e waṃ pa// rin chen mi 'gyur rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po//.* A further inscription just above describes a detail of this scene: *dpal stug rtogs brjod brgya brgyad ri mo'i lam// dang po 'dren pa tshul khrims rin chen dang// lha dga' mched bcas* [bcas corrected for; 'khor ba'i] *sor rtsa yi// zlos gar ji ltar bsgyur nas bris pa'i tshul//.* The scene in the upper left corner shows the main figure visiting the Klu-sdings bla-brang (at Ngor). Here there is also an inscription (see below, Inscriptions). The verses Zhu-chen wrote to accompany the original (*phyi mo*) paintings of the life of the Ngor mkhan-po Rin-chen-mi-'gyur-rgyal-mtshan are found in vol. 5, pp. 383–386, of his collected works.

[695] This work by Rang-byung-rdo-rje is listed in the Mi-rigs dpe-mdzod-khang of Beijing Tibetan catalogue *Bod gangs cān gyi grub mtha' ris med kyi...*, no. 001167, a xylograph (margin: *ka*): *sTon pa thams cad mkhyen pa'i skyes rabs phreng/ bcu phrag gsum dang bzhi ni dpa' bo'i ste/ phyi nas rang byung rdo rjes bdun lhag pa'i/ drug bcus brgya rtsa rdzogs par mdzad pa bzhugs//.*

[696] Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 514 (*ta* 261a).

[697] dPal-ldan-chos-skyong, vol. 3, p. 27.5 (*waṃ* 14a): *lha pa bstan skong bcas bcu skor la/ 'phags yul gyi slob dpon chen po dpa' bo'i dgongs don ltar skyes rabs so bzhi pa'i kha skong karma pa chos rje rang byung rdo rjes mdzad pa ltar gyi bris* [*sku*?] *bzhengs rgyur/ de bzhin gshegs pas byang chub mchog tu sems bskyed pa'i thog ma stag mor lus sbyin pa'i dpe'u nas dgu btsugs/.* Before this, dPal-ldan-chos-skyong had dreamt of the artist (*lha pa*) of Ye-na, Kun-dga'-bkra-shis. See *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 424 (*e* 411b). The word *lha pa* would thus seem to be a regional variation for *lha bzo.*

[698] Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 530 (*ta* 269a).

[699] *Ibid.*, p. 515 (*ta* 261b). The passage describes the completed art works and also their consecration ceremonies. See also the account of the temple building he wrote in 1755 appearing in his collected writings, vol. 7, p. 247.3: *ldebs ris mkhan lha ris pa mang tsam mchis pa las/ lha dpon karma'i lha dga' dang dge dgon ye shes blo gros kyis mtshon pa'i ri mo pa nyi shu bkra bas de mchan* (?) *tshon mdangs pa nyer gcig/ tshon brgyabs pa dang tshon sbyor ba bcas nyer gsum/ gser 'dur ba dang....*

[700] Zhu-chen, *Chos smra ba'i*, p. 536 (*ta* 172a).

[701] The title of the work is: *Rang gi rtogs brjod thang kar bkod pa'i zhal byang don bsdus kun dga' bskyed pa'i zhing khams rgya mtsho,* and it was published with the printed (Derge) edition of his collected works, vol. *ta* (8), ff. 137a-142b.

[702] Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen, *dGa' ldan rnam rgyal gling*, pp. 318–19 (*cha* 158b-159a): *bla ma sangs rgyas lha dbang.../ de'i nying slob lta bur gyur pa/ lha bzo rta mgrin mgon po zhes bya ba byung ste/ de nas rim gyis mched pa la/ slar chos dbyings rgya mtsho sogs dang/ lho brag pa sogs sman gsar ba'i lugs kyi ri mo'i rgyun yang 'dres pa'i srol bzung ba/ lha bzo ba dge slong ye shes blo gros dang/ ye shes chos 'grub/* [159a] *sangs rgyas rin chen dpon g.yog ste/....* Lho-brag sprul-sku Nor-bu-rgya-mtsho is mentioned after 'Phreng-kha-ba in a list of great artists of southern Tibet in *Ri mo mkhan*, p. 145. Another possible Lho-brag-pa is of course Lho-brag bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu, who was active at the Lhasa court in the 1690s under the patronage of the sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho.

[703] Zhu-chen, *Lha rgyal srang gi chos sde*, vol. 6, p. 418.6: *karma lha ltem gyi bzo rigs mkhas pa'i rtse mo lha dpon lha dga' can spun sogs dang dpal yul chab mdo zla rgyud sogs nas lha ris pa brgyad cu tsam dang/.*

[704] Zhu-chen, Collected Writings, vol. 6, p. 422.4. It is interesting to note that Lha-dga's title is now *lha dpon* (short for *lha bzo'i dpon*? "chief of deity-portrayers"?).

[705] See for instance his discussion of the traditional portrayal of the deity Vaiśrāvaṇa (rNam-thos-sras), *rGyal chen rnam thos bu'i sku brnyan bskrun pa las brtsams pa'i bka' lan tshangs sras rgyud mangs 'khrol ba'i dbyangs chung*, Collected Writings, vol. 4, pp. 213–245 (*cha* 106a-122a); his praise of the Sixteen Elders, written in connection with paintings, *Thub pa gnas brtan bcu drug gi bstod pa utpa la'i phreng ba*, Collected Writings, vol. 7, pp. 59–65 (*a* 30a-33a); a brief inscription to accompany a depiction of a "Wheel of Existence," *gTsug lag khang gi sgo khang du 'dri bar 'os pa srid pa'i 'khor lo cha lnga pa kha byang*, vol. 7, p. 65 (*a* 33a); the verses he wrote to accompany the original (*phyi mo*) paintings of the life of the Ngor mkhan-po Rin-chen-mi-'gyur-rgyal-mtshan, vol. 5, pp. 383–386; and a work written in connection with a painting of the hand-print of a lama surrounded by other figures, produced as a field for the accumulation of merit (*bsod nams bsags pa'i zhing*), vol. 5, pp. 386–388.

Chapter 13

Later Regional Styles: A Few Notes

Most of the regional styles that continued from the 18th through the 20th centuries claim to descend from sMan-ris traditions. Nevertheless, each of the major regional "schools" became noticeably distinct from the others, and there occurred a major split along geographic lines between the schools in central Tibet (dBus and gTsang) and those in Khams and A-mdo to the east and northeast.

Centers of Tibetan Buddhist art even developed in Mongolia[706] and at the Chinese Manchu court.[707] Each local tradition possessed its own leading artists, though the sources available to me do not permit more than a few cursory sketches of them and their activities.

A-mdo

The sMan-ris traditions that came to flourish in parts of Khams and A-mdo are typical for their further incorporation of Chinese influences, in the case of A-mdo painters perhaps mainly through further direct contact with Chinese models. (In Khams there was also the likelihood of influence by way of the Karma-sgar-bris and Kar-shod-pa traditions.) In A-mdo, the famous tradition of religious art at Reb-gong (or Re-bkong) is said according to one tradition to have originated owing to the activities of the sMan-ris master Tshe-'phel of bDe-chen-gsang-sngags-mkhar-pa, who was sent to A-mdo in 1715 by the Central Tibetan authorities for the purpose of painting the murals at the new bKra-shis-sgo-mang monastic center at bKra-shis-'khyil, in response to a petition made by the 1st 'Jam-dbyangs-bzhad-pa, Ngag-dbang-brtson-'grus (1648–1721).[708] However, the modern Seng-ge-gshong artist rDo-rje-gcod-pa makes no mention of this in his article about Reb-gong's artistic traditions, but argues instead that such A-mdo-ba traditions must have long predated the arrival of the dGe-lugs-pas.[709] In particular he repeats an oral tradition about Seng-ge-gshong according to which the district had become important for its artists after the other Tibetan people of Reb-gong had threatened to attack it, but those threats were averted through the intervention of Rong-po Yab-rje bla-ma sKal-ldan-rgya-mtsho (1607–1677). According to that account, not only did the latter powerful lama prohibit any further hostilities, but he also ordered that no other districts be allowed to create sacred images, and that any works of art had to be commissioned from the artists of Seng-ge-gshong.[710]

More recently Klu-'bum lha-ris-pa (evidently not to be identified with the "Klu-'bum dge-bshes" mentioned below) became widely known not only in A-mdo but also in Central Tibet. Another famous painter from A-mdo was the Gling-rgya'i lha-bzo bsTan-pa-dar-rgyas, who flourished in the 19th century as the chief painting master of the rDzogs-chen master Zhabs-dkar Tshogs-drug-rang-grol (1781–1851).[711] The most famous masters from A-mdo rNga-pa included Kos paṇḍi-ta Blo-bzang-shes-rab, Mo-'gab lha-bris-pa, and Lha-bzo 'On-pa.[712]



Fig. 172. The Buddha Śākyamuni, with an elaborate backdrop. Modern drawing, A-mdo (rGyal-rong) style. From Amdo Jamyang ('Jam-dbyangs-blo-gsal, 1982), p. 69.



Fig. 173. Shar sKal-ldan-rgya-mtsho. Xylograph, Amdo. Published Bod kyi nang bstan lha ris kyi sgyu rtsal, p. 45.

In A-mdo rGyal-rong, the arts and crafts are said to have flourished widely from the time of the great ruler and patron Sa-mang-rgyal-po onward. The artists in the hereditary lineage of the painter 'Jam-dbyangs-blo-gsal of rGyal-rong included in an earlier period the masters A-'bum, Lha-bzo Tshe-ring, and Lha-bzo Shes-rab-phun-tshogs. More recent artists of note include 'Jam-dbyangs-blo-gsal's father, Ang-dang, and Lha-bzo Dam-chos.[713]

The various A-mdo traditions deserve more detailed investigation. There exist written records in abundance for the most recent centuries, and probably many more post-16th-century murals survive there than in Khams to the south.

Khams

sGar-bris Masters in Khams of the 18th through 20th Centuries

During the late 17th and early 18th centuries, the monastery Zur-mang bDud-rtsi-'khyil in Nang-chen district of Khams was another important center of the sGar-bris style. The 3rd sPrul-sku Che-tshang, a contemporary of the 7th Zur-mang Chos-rgyam Drung-pa sprul-sku (Trungpa Tulku) 'Jam-dpal-chos-rgyal (?), was a great and prolific painter in the second half of the 1600s.[714] This "sprul-sku Che-tshang" was the Che-tshang gSung-rab-rgya-mtsho (d. 1729) of Zur-mang who wrote an iconometry manual.[715] In his extreme old age he was a teacher of the young Si-tu Paṇ-chen, for instance for the text transmission (*lung*) of the Kanjur canon.[716] The 8th Chos-rgyam Drung-pa sprul-sku ('Gyur-med-bstan-'phel?) was also a masterful painter of the sGar-bris tradition, the main later center of which is said to have been at "Karma Geru" near Ḳarma-dgon in northwest Khams.[717]

KARMA-BSTAN-'DZIN-DGE-LEGS-NYI-MA AND OTHERS IN THE 19TH CENTURY

Like a number of his predecessors mentioned above, the 14th Karma-pa Theg-mchog-rdo-rje (1797–1867) also took an active interest in sacred art.[718] He is said to have been competent enough to teach the artist Karma-bstan-'dzin-dge-legs-nyi-ma the sGar-bris style of painting. The latter, after gaining perfect mastery of painting, sculpture and proportions, composed at 'Og-min Karma-dgon in Khams an iconometry manual treating twelve main classes of proportions, entitled *sKu gzugs kyi mtshan nyid rnam bshad blo gsar dgyes pa'i don gnyis 'bras ster*. When composing it, he consulted most of the manuals available then, including some that are now very rare: the 8th Karma-pa's *Nyi ma chen po'i me long*, sprul-sku Rin-chen-grub-mchog's *dGe legs snying po*, the *rNam 'grel nyi ma'i 'od zer* ascribed to the 10th Karma-pa and a disciple of his, and treatise *Du ku la* of Che-tshang gSung-rab-rgya-mtsho (d. 1729).[719] This same manual by Karma-bstan-'dzin-dge-legs-nyi-ma has in recent years been used in the art department of the Tibetan school in Derge. A remarkable painting of the sixty-two deities of the Cakrasamvara cycle which he did on the skull of a famous meditator was kept at a meditation-retreat of dPal-spungs. It survives even to this day.[720]

To this same Karma bka'-brgyud tradition of Khams there also belongs an unpublished collection of illustrations (available to me as a 72–page photocopy) that shows how to proportion and depict various maṇḍalas. The author or compiler of the work was probably Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas (Karma-ratna),[721] who no doubt belonged to the same circles as the above-mentioned Karma-bstan-'dzin-dge-legs-nyi-ma; he refers, for instance, to the 14th Karma-pa as his revered teacher in the opening lines of the work.[722] The compiler refers many times to the proportional writings of that same 14th Karma-pa as one of his main sources, commonly also citing the relevant writings of the 8th Karma-pa Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje. A number of the sketches included in this manual also go back to drawings made by the compiler himself, 'Og-min Karma mkhan-po Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas (mkhan-po Ratna = lnga-rig-pa Ratna, pp. 57–58), as is explicitly mentioned in several inscriptions. Other artists or authorities on maṇḍala ritual mentioned in some respect in the work include: the 7th Karma-pa (p. 4); 'Be lo-tsā-ba Tshe-dbang-kun-khyab (p. 5); Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa (p. 7); slob-dpon Karmeśvara (p. 9);



Fig. 174. The 14th Karma-pa Theg-mchog-rdo-rje. Detail from a modern redrawing of a Kar-shod-pa composition. After Karma Thinley (1980), p. 120.

Fig. 175

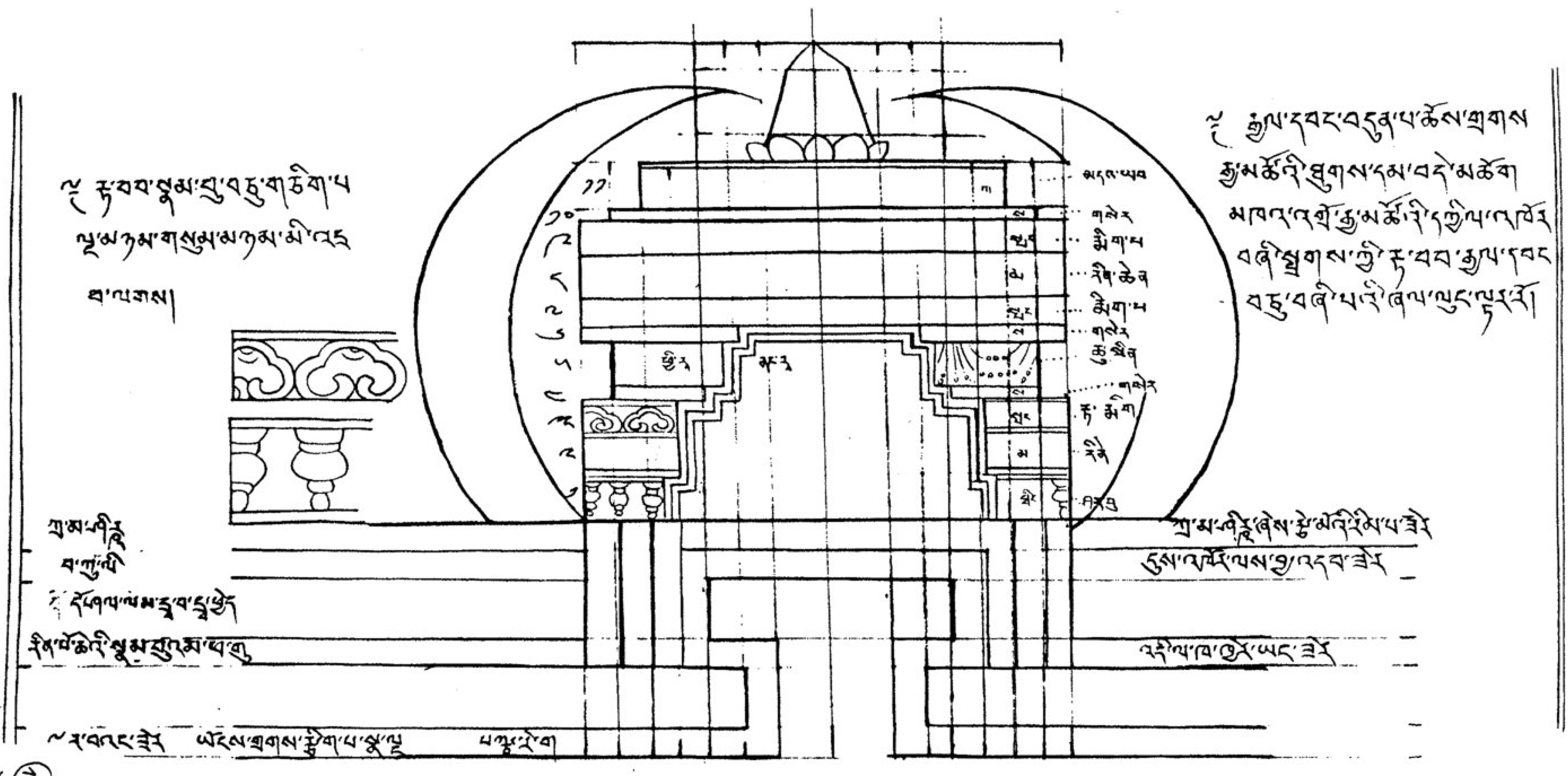


Fig. 176

Figs. 175, 176. Details of maṇḍalas, according to the tradition of the 14th Karma-pa, Theg-mchog-rdo-rje. Drawing. From an untitled, unpublished 19th-c. Karma bka'-brgyud-pa manual of maṇḍala representation, pp. 3, 4, and 22.

Fig. 177. Details of maṇḍalas following the tradition of the Kar-shod master wood-block carver A-chos. Drawing. From an untitled, unpublished 19th-c. Karma bka'-brgyud-pa manual of maṇḍala representation, p. 26.

Fig. 178. Celestial palace as drawn by mkhan-po Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas (mkhan-po Karma-ratna). Drawing. From an untitled, unpublished 19th-c. Karma bka'-brgyud-pa manual of maṇḍala representation, p. 58.

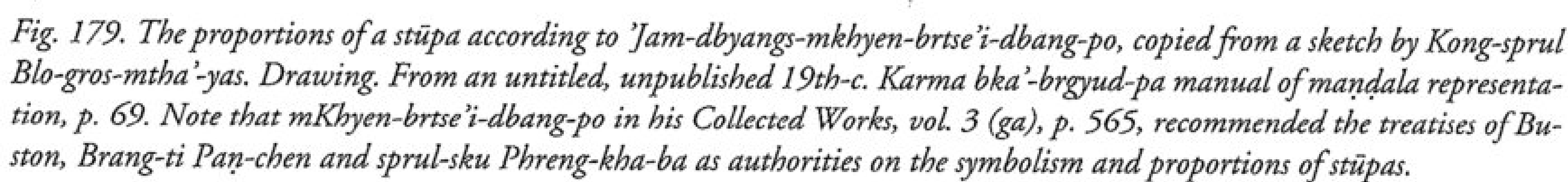


Fig. 179. The proportions of a stūpa according to 'Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po, copied from a sketch by Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas. Drawing. From an untitled, unpublished 19th-c. Karma bka'-brgyud-pa manual of maṇḍala representation, p. 69. Note that mKhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po in his Collected Works, vol. 3 (ga), p. 565, recommended the treatises of Bu-ston, Brang-ti Paṇ-chen and sprul-sku Phreng-kha-ba as authorities on the symbolism and proportions of stūpas.

Shākyabhadra (p. 10, author of a *rDo rje phreng ba'i thig rtsa*); Karma-chags-med (p. 11); Tāranātha (p. 15); Rang-byung-rdo-rje (pp. 15, 21); gTsug-lag-phreng-ba (p. 18); Lo-chen Dharma-shrī (pp. 21, 24); "gTer-chen rdo-rje-'chang" [teacher of author, mChog-gyur-gling-pa?] (pp. 23, 31); zhabs-drung [Padma-mdo-sngags-gling] (p. 23); gTer-chen Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa (p. 25); Blo-mchog-rig-pa'i-rdo-rje (p. 26); mkhan-chen Jo-dga'-ma Padma-phrin-las-snying-po (p. 29); Si-tu bsTan-pa'i-nyin-byed (p. 31, see also p. 10); 'Jam-dbyangs-don-grub-'od-zer of mTshur-phu (p. 31); mkhan-chen Su-canda [Zla-ba-bzang-po?] (p. 31); Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje (p. 54); Karma-gling-pa (p. 55); Kar-shos [=Kar-shod] rigs-byed spar-mkhan A-chos (p. 56); Kong-sprul [one of his main teachers, who drew the proportions of a stūpa] and mKhyen-brtse ['Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po] (p. 69); Gung-ru Shes-rab-bzang-po (p. 71); rTogs-ldan Kun-khyab [artist] (p. 71), and sprul-ming Thub-bstan-bshad-sgrub-chos-kyi-nyi-ma (p. 71).[723]

A still more recent master of the sGar-bris tradition was the painter Sa Kar-'brug from Zi-ling. He oversaw the restoration in 1926 of the great "mThong-grol" temple of dPal-spungs. Murals of several goddesses as well as of Vajradhara surrounded by the eight "chariots" (great founders) of the Kaṃ-tshang (=Karma) bka'-brgyud-pa, which he painted in his excellent sGar-bris style, are still to be seen there in the upper and lower skylights in the roof. The murals within the main part of the structure were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution.[724]

The sGar-bris master bSod-nams-nyi-ma from Nang-chen, who was still alive in the early 1980s, had worked at dPal-spungs even more recently. The paintings of the bKa'-brgyud lineage masters that he painted at the dPal-spungs retreat all displayed an astounding realism.[725]

THANG-BLA-TSHE-DBANG

The senior painting master at the Derge Tibetan school until the late 1980s was Thang-bla-tshe-dbang (1902–ca. 1990) of A-khri in Derge district. He studied first the Old sMan-ris under A-khu bKra-rab at dPal-spungs. When he was fifteen, he was instructed by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho to study at Kaḥ-thog, in addition to other subjects, the sMan-ris tradition under Gru-pa Phur-bu (Chab-mdo Phur-bu-tshe-ring) and 'Dzing-lha 'Jam-dbyangs. In 1926 when painting the murals in dPal-spungs with Kar-'brug, he mastered the sGar-bris together with the theory of iconometry. After this he was often praised as a "magically emanated artist" by the great master 'Jam-dbyangs mKhyen-brtse-chos-kyi-blo-gros (1893–1959).[726] He worked for many years for the dPal-spungs Si-tu sprul-sku not only as artist, but also as secretary responsible for important, elegant compositions.[727] Under Si-tu at dPal-spungs he painted many thangkas and also oversaw mural projects. Then he became secretary for the 16th Karma-pa (b. 1924) and stayed a long time in dBus province.[728]

He experimented in different styles. He painted a set of the Sixteen Elders in a Chinese style, as well as a watercolor or ink-wash painting of Mi-la (*mi la chu ris ma*). He also painted a portrait of his patron dPal-spungs Si-tu Padma-dbang-mchog-rgyal-po in "the style of foreigners" (i.e. Western-art-inspired realism).[729] In addition he is said to have written a brief history of Tibetan Buddhist painting.[730]

In 1952 he was responsible for drawing in a basically Old sMan-ris style (with some sGar-bris affinities) the originals of some twenty-three figures carved onto printing blocks at Derge, including images of the Sixteen Elders.[731] He himself commented that the printing blocks and murals at Tāranātha's monastery of Jo-nang rTag-brtan-phun-tshogs-gling were similarly in an Old sMan-ris style that had affinities with the sGar-bris. His murals at dPal-spungs, however, were in a sGar-bris style, with landscape and coloration in a Chinese style. He was the chief painter also at the building of the g.Yung-drung lha-khang at Derge in 1982.[732] During the Cultural Revolution he was able to save many precious objects from destruction. In more recent times he took responsibility for the renovation of dPal-spungs, and he taught many students who are now capably working on their own.[733]

Thang-bla-tshe-dbang's students include painters who left Tibet and became prominent artists in their own right. The painter Shes-rab-rgyal-mtshan of the Beru family (now at Samyeling center, Scotland) was a student of Thang-lha-tshe-dbang before Gega Lama's time. He was from the rNam-rgyal-dgon monastery in lDan-khog, northwest of Derge.[734] Another important sGar-bris master of this period was bKra-rgyal from Nang-chen, who trained several gifted students before his death in Rumtek, Sikkim.

THE RECENT KAR-SHOD-PA

The Kar-shod-pa style also continued to be cultivated in Khams. Since at least the early 18th century this Karma-sgar-bris style seems to have been an eclectic fusion which selectively included both Old and New sMan-ris influences, in addition to the predominating impulses from the sGar-bris. The painters Padma-rab-brtan and mGon-po-rdo-rje were two Kar-shod-pa artists of the early 20th century whose names are still remembered by living tradition. (On them see above, chapter 11.) Other recent artists who were influenced—at least in part—by the Kar-shod-pa tradition in the 20th century included the Gling-tshang artist Gega Lama's teacher Thang-bla-tshe-dbang (b. 1902) of Derge dPal-yul, who learned coloring from Padma-rab-brtan of the Kar-shod-pa.[735] But the latter also learned the Khams New sMan-ris and a more orthodox sGar-bris.

Later sMan-bris Traditions of Khams

KHAMS-SPRUL KUN-DGA'-BSTAN-'DZIN

In Khams, a variety of the sMan-ris is said to have been practiced by the 3rd Khams-sprul Kun-dga'-bstan-'dzin (1680–1728) and others.[736] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu described seeing at Karma-dgon in Khams a set of thangkas depicting in great detail the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava painted by Kun-dga'-bstan-'dzin in an Old sMan-ris style. These paintings were later used by (the next Khams-sprul) Chos-kyi-nyi-ma (1730–1780) as sacred objects for his ritual and meditation practice.[737] The Khams-sprul's monastery of sGa-nyag Khams-pa-sgar Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs-gling at Lha-thog in present Chab-mdo district of Khams (about 60 kilometers northeast of Chab-mdo town) remained an important center of art down to the present century.[738]

PHUR-BU-TSHE-RING OF CHAB-MDO AND A NEW SMAN-RIS OF KHAMS

Chab-mdo Phur-bu-tshe-ring was one of the outstanding artists of 19th-century Khams who worked in a sMan-bris hybrid style that was considerably influenced by the Karma-sgar-bris.[739] He was from the Gru-pa-tshang, a family of hereditary artists from Chab-mdo in the rDza-chu Valley. Other members of the Gru-pa family of artists were active in and near Derge during the late 19th century. The artist Gru-pa dKon-tshe [dKon-mchog-tshe-ring?], for instance, was *dbu chen* for the painting of the rDzong-gsar main temple building (*gtsug lag khang*) under the patronage of 'Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po (1820–1892).[740]

The members of this family were very religious people, and their home was furnished like an ornately decorated temple. While Phur-bu-tshe-ring's father was still alive, there were a total of eight artists in the family, including both painters and metal image-makers (who beat and gilt copper). One of Phur-bu-tshe-ring's brothers was bSod-nams-tshe-ring, an expert painter and consummate mask maker. Two other brothers who painted were Lha-rtse (?) and Bu-drug (?).[741]

Phur-bu-tshe-ring enjoyed great fame throughout Khams but especially in Derge. The Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan [i.e. Chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho?] extolled him and officially recognized him as his own "emanated artisan" (*sprul pa'i bzo bo*). He was invited to Kaḥ-thog and there recognized as such through a public ceremony. During the painting of the murals of the Lha-khang chen-mo temple at Kaḥ-thog, he functioned as chief artist (*dbu chen*). He was responsible for the Kaḥ-thog thangkas depicting the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava and the bKa'-brgyad, and he drew the originals for the Derge xylographs of the Twelve Great Deeds of the Buddha.



Fig. 180. Birth of the Buddha. Xylograph, Khams (Derge), late 19th c. or early 20th c. Original drawn by Chab-mdo Phur-bu-tshe-ring.



Fig. 181. The Buddha's descent from the Heavens. Xylograph, Khams (Derge), late 19th c. or early 20th c. Original by Chab-mdo Phur-bu-tshe-ring.



Fig. 182. rDo-rje-gro-lod. One of Eight Manifestations of Padmasambhava. Line drawing based on Khams (Kaḥ-thog?) xylographs. Original said to have been drawn by Chab-mdo Phur-bu-tshe-ring or one of his chief students. After B. C. Olschak with Geshe Thubten Wangyal, Mystic Art of Ancient Tibet (New York, 1973), p. 28.



Fig. 183. Nyi-ma-'od-zer. One of Eight Manifestations of Padmasambhava. Line drawing based on Khams (Kaḥ-thog?) xylographs. Original said to have been drawn by Chab-mdo Phur-bu-tshe-ring or one of his chief students. After B. C. Olschak with Geshe Thubten Wangyal, Mystic Art of Ancient Tibet (New York, 1973), p. 29.

In his style, non-symmetrical compositions were favored. One found both fullness and emptiness, and exceptionally skilled composition of the overall layout. His paintings were beautiful whether viewed from near or far. It was considered a variety of the New sMan-ris, though some have called it a "Khams style" (*khams bris*).[742] In this tradition, the proportions of divine figures were not as rigidly adhered to as in the Old sMan-ris. Too much dependence on the proportional lines was felt to be excessively restrictive, as it hindered the expression of many special stylistic effects. On the other hand it was acknowledged that a wrongly proportioned image would not serve as a support or receptacle for the enlightened spirit (*ye shes pa*) with which it was to be embued in the vivification ceremony (*rab gnas*).[743]

He is said to have been the artist responsible for drawing many originals of deities and other thangka compositions that were later carved onto printing blocks at Kaḥ-thog monastery and at the sDe-dge dgon-chen. The dPal-spungs Si-tu sprul-sku of his period (Padma-dbang-mchog-rgyal-po, 1886–1952?) praised his paintings in the highest terms.[744]

Phur-bu-tshe-ring's main students included such outstanding artists as dbu-chen lha-bzo dBang-dga', 'Dzing-lha-'jam-dbyangs, (his younger brother) Gru-pa bSod-nams-tshe-ring, lha-bzo Bla-ma-dbang-'dus, Tshe-dpag-lha-tshogs, Tshal-ma dGe-legs of Karma Lha-stengs, and Sib-mda' Karma-rdo-rje. After a certain point, his tradition became so influential that it even started to influence most of the painters in Khams following more mainstream sGar-bris styles. Many gave up their original tradition and went over to a tradition that resembled more closely this New sMan-ris.

His student 'Dzing-lha-'jam-dbyangs was responsible for drawing the originals for a number of xylographs at Derge and Kaḥ-thog. They were very difficult to differentiate from those by Phur-bu-tshe-ring himself.[745]

Chab-mdo bSod-nams-tshe-ring

Phur-bu-tshe-ring's younger brother bSod-nams-tshe-ring was also a very fine painter, but at some point he "turned lazy" and started doing business as a trader instead of painting. When Phur-bu-tshe-ring died, however, bSod-nams-tshe-ring began to paint again. As far as fame was concerned, Phur-bu-tshe-ring was by far the more famous of the two, but in the opinion of some accomplished artists (including bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du, bSod-nams-tshe-ring's student and the main source for this account), the younger brother bSod-nams-tshe-ring was in some respects the better artist. But both were exceptionally good; it was said that their works of art "did not need to be formally vivified (or blessed)" (because they innately possessed a spiritual power or presence).[746]

bSod-nams-tshe-ring is said by some to have been responsible for designing the Derge xylographs of the Buddha's Twelve Great Deeds[747] and of the Eight Emanations of Padmasambhava.[748] (But as mentioned above, other sources attribute these to his older brother Phur-bu-tshe-ring or to the latter's disciple 'Dzing-lha-'jam-dbyangs; in any case they were in the same style.) The carver of the blocks for both sets was the famed master carver Tshe-ring of Derge Ku-se. Both artist and carver were regarded as emanations of Mañjuśrī.[749] A print from blocks designed by bSod-nams-tshe-ring of Klong-chen rab-'byams-pa survives that was used by his student bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du as an object for religious practice. bSod-nams-tshe-ring is also said to have drawn the figures for the *Sa skya gdung rabs chen mo* blocks at Derge.

The style of bSod-nams-tshe-ring and his older brother was called "rDza-rgyud sMan-gsar" ("the New sMan-ris of rDza-rgyud district"). bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du described the style further as a *Kar sman zung 'brel* ("Combined Karma-sgar-bris and sMan-ris"). The tradition did indeed bring together various styles; its followers stated, for instance, that they painted the Mahāsiddhas in an Indian manner, the Sthaviras in a Chinese manner, and the Tantric deities (Heruka) in a Tibetan manner. The King of Derge esteemed and preferred this "rDza-rgyud-ma" style, as did the previous Khams-sprul Rin-po-che (bsTan-pa'i-nyi-ma 1848–1907 or Sangs-rgyas-bstan-'dzin 1908–1929), and thanks to them it was well patron-



Fig. 184. Klong-chen rab-'byams-pa. Xylograph, Khams, early 20th c. Original drawing ascribed to Chab-mdo bSod-nams-tshe-ring. Courtesy of N. and V. Ronge.

ized.[750] One would have expected this tradition to be related to another eclectic style of this same general district, the Kar-shod-pa. Ngödrup Ronge, a recent painter trained in this tradition, strongly maintained, however, that these upper rDza-rgyud-ma "sMan-gsar" traditions were not primarily the continuation of the earlier Kar-shod-pa traditions.[751]

Lha-thog Rang-dge bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du

In the mid 20th century the leading master at Lha-thog Khams-pa-sgar, the Khams-sprul's monastic seat, was the dbu-mdzad bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du (ca. 1899–1982) of the Ronge (Rang-dge) family.[752] He was born in Lha-thog, and as a young man he studied under the great Chab-mdo bSod-nams-tshe-ring. His own father had been a carpenter and builder who had dedicated him originally to the monkhood, but he decided on his own to follow the vocation of an artist.

bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du began to paint at the age of only about 18 or 19, shortly after he had run away from the monastery where he had been studying Buddhist ritual and doctrine under his uncle. For a while he visited the "Lha-bzo-tshang" family of artists who were then staying at the Khams-sprul's main seat, Khams-pa-sgar. The head of the family was a nephew of the famous artists Chab-mdo Phur-bu-tshe-ring and bSod-nams-tshe-ring. bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du picked up some of the artist implements there and casually tried his hand at a little drawing and painting. Seeing his innate talent, the head of the family told him that he could become an artist if he tried. So he went home and collected together as much food as he could to support himself for a few months of learning. For the return journey he loaded his horse so heavily that he had to walk on foot the whole three-day return journey. But even so, he had to return home more than several times that year to get more food.

For one year bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du lived and studied with the Lha-bzo-tshang family. Then he went to the senior master bSod-nams-tshe-ring to continue his studies, where he stayed and worked for four years continuously. Here, as an apprentice to the master, he did not have to provide his own food or pay anything for his training.[753] In fact, his teacher came to love him and more or less adopted him, taking him everywhere with him. bSod-nams-tshe-ring was easy-going, jocular and broad-minded, and they used to laugh a lot and enjoy their time together. bSod-nams-tshe-ring liked to dance and sing, and bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du could imitate his voice almost perfectly so that people would mistake him for his teacher if they heard him singing from the other side of a wall.

bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du was the best of bSod-nams-tshe-ring's students, almost equal to his master in his skill. bSod-nams-tshe-ring used to say jokingly, "Whatever I possess, I have fixed it on bsTan-'dzin." "You mean, you really did get everything from your teacher?" bsTan-'dzin's son asked him once. "Yes!" he replied. "He was not only a religious man, but also a 'crook'!" (He was referring here to the fact that his teacher used to employ various means to gain better pay as an artist.) bSod-nams-tshe-ring used to praise his student bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du and used to joke that he was his own "reincarnation which had manifested before his death" (*ma 'das sprul sku*).

After five years' study bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du became an *dbu mdzad* ("master artist"), but later he drew compositions more than he actually colored: the structure and proportions of his works were especially good. People could not differentiate a mural he had designed from one by bSod-nams-tshe-ring. bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du was also expert as a mask-maker and sculptor of clay.[754] Together with him there also worked his cousin Phur-bsam-pa, who like him had five sons.[755]

Other sMan-bris Painters

Another great Khams-pa sMan-ris painter of the later (i.e. post-17th-century) period was Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen, to whom a chapter has been devoted above. In recent centuries there also existed in Khams, alongside the later sGar-bris and Khams-pa sMan-gsar traditions, lineages of painting that retained a still stronger link with the old sMan-ris tradition of central Tibet. The recent painter Padma-rnam-grol-mtha'-yas (b. 1966) records, for instance, that his maternal



Fig. 185. Mar-pa and the Early bKa'-brgyud-pa Lineage. By the Karma sGar-bris artist Sherab Palden Beru (Shes-rab-dpal-ldan from rNam-rgyal dGon-pa in Khams lDan-ma), a disciple of Thang-bla-tshe-dbang. After Chogyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism (Berkeley, Shambhala, 1973), p. 30.

༄༅། །ཨོ་རྒྱན་མཚོ་སྐྱེས་པདྨའི་སྡོང་པོ་ལ། །རྒྱལ་བའི་རྣམ་འཕྲུལ་རང་བཞིན་ལྷུན་གྱི་གྲུབ།
མཚན་རྫོགས་དཔེ་བྱད་ཡོན་ཏན་ཚོགས་འབར་བའི། །པདྨ་འབྱུང་གནས་བདག་གི་སྤྱི་བོར་མཆོད།།

Fig. 186. Padmasambhava. Modern drawing, Khams-pa sMan-ris style. Drawn by the contemporary artist Padma-rnam-grol-mtha'-yas, introduction, p. 4 (nga, fig. 17,c).

uncle and teacher, the painter mGon-po-bstan-'dzin, though he studied under both sMan-bris and "Khams-bris" masters, primarily followed the sMan-bris tradition of bla-ma Yon-tan-bzang-po. mGon-po-bstan-'dzin was born in Sa-ngan Re-khe in present Go-'jo rdzong of Khams, and his teacher for the "Khams-bris" tradition (i.e. a mixture of the sGar-bris and Kar-shod-pa-influenced sMan-ris?) was the Re-khe lha-bris Shes-rab. The latter represented a continuation of the great master Chab-mdo Phur-bu's tradition. Re-khe lha-bris Shes-rab's teacher had been a certain Lha-phrug, a monk who had been told as a youth to study painting by the master mchog-sprul Byang-chub-chos-kyi-seng-ge of Nyi-dgon steng-pa in eastern Re-khe, and who accordingly had gone to study under the famed Chab-mdo Phur-bu-tshe-ring.[756]

mGon-po-bstan-'dzin's other main teacher, however, upheld a more conservative and unmixed sMan-bris tradition, and it was this tradition that he himself chiefly followed. This second teacher was lha-bris Ye-shes of 'Ba' Gling-dkar-shis-pa. He studied under him for about three years during the building and painting of mGon-po-bstan-'dzin's home monastery in Re-khe. Lha-bris Ye-shes's teacher was the master dge-slong gnas-brtan-pa A-rob of Gling-shis Byang-mkhar-dgon. The latter had studied under the famous artist bla-ma Guṇabhadra, also known as Tshwa-li bla-ma Yon-tan-bzang-po, who had gone to dBus province as a young man and there had studied the sMan-bris style. In his forties, however, Tshwa-li bla-ma Yon-tan-bzang-po renounced all worldly projects, dedicating himself to a lifetime of contemplation and religious teaching, under the influence of his master, 'Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po. It was said that a painting of Padmasambhava by his hand on the walls of Gling-shis Ya-po-dgon was actually heard to speak.[757]

At least one other major center of the sMan-ris style is said to have existed in Khams. This was in the Brag-g.yab district in western Khams.

'Bri-gung

As mentioned above in connection with the mKhyen-ris, a branch of the latter tradition is recorded to have continued to exist northeast of Lhasa at 'Bri-gung from the late 1600s until at least the early 1800s. It was propagated there by the students of dKon-mchog-phrin-las-bzang-po (1656–1719) and was still there during the period of bsTan-'dzin-padma-rgyal-mtshan (1770–1826).[758] According to this account, then, one of the later 'Bri-gung painting styles (*'bri bris*) was an offshoot of the mKhyen-ris. Its connection with the old 'Bri-gung style or styles (*'bri bris rnying pa*), whose existence has also been reported, is as yet unknown.[759]

Furthermore, the distinctive more recent 'Bri-gung style is said to have descended from that tradition.[760] The contemporary 'Bri-gung-pa lama Ayang Rinpoche states:

> The Drikung style of painting was famous on account of its special characteristics. One of these is the way in which a very subtle effect is created by the use of light colours in combination with fine detail. As a popular saying goes: 'Drikung painting is like the dawn' [*'bri bris tho rangs shar ba 'dra*].[761] .... Today [late 1984], only one master of this style of painting remains alive: an elderly monk called Yeshe Jamyang [Ye-shes-'jam-dbyangs, b. ca. 1935, sMyung-la (Nurla), Ladakh], who lives in Ladakh.[762]

A similar account is related by a leading artist of the tradition, who further states that the master of the above-mentioned painter Ye-shes-'jam-dbyangs was a certain "Benbe," a layman painter from a hereditary family of artists at 'Bri-gung who was the foremost painter of his generation.[763]

Special characteristics of the (more recent?) 'Bri-gung-pa style are said to have included the depicting of mountains with peaks that possessed a particular pointed shape resembling the mountain peaks in the vicinity of 'Bri-gung. Since the rivers near 'Bri-gung are normally quite turbulent, the rivers depicted in paintings too are similarly said to have been often shown as roiled with large waves. Flowers in the background landscape were likewise said to have been of a certain type: in this style the gentian flower (*spang rgyan*) in particular was said to have been sometimes depicted, similar



Fig. 187. 'Bri-gung Monastery. After Snellgrove and Richardson (1969), p. 40. Photograph H. E. Richardson.

to its actual appearance in the meadows of 'Bri-gung.[764]

A number of paintings are attributed to the "'Bri-gung style" or 'Bri-bris in catalogues, but one should not be overhasty in automatically identifying all paintings produced by a religious tradition as belonging to the style that bears the same name.[765] The same goes for thangkas from such religious traditions as the 'Brug-pa, sTag-lung-pa[766] and Bon-po.[767]



Figs. 188 and 189. Two recent examples of the 'Bri-gung style. Thangkas, 'Bri-gung?, 19th or early 20th c.? Now in Ladakh. Photograph courtesy of Nurla Ngawang Tsering.







Figs. 190A, B, C and D. 'Bri-gung-pa Lineage Masters, with mahāsiddhas in background. Four thangkas from a set now preserved in Limi (17th c.?).

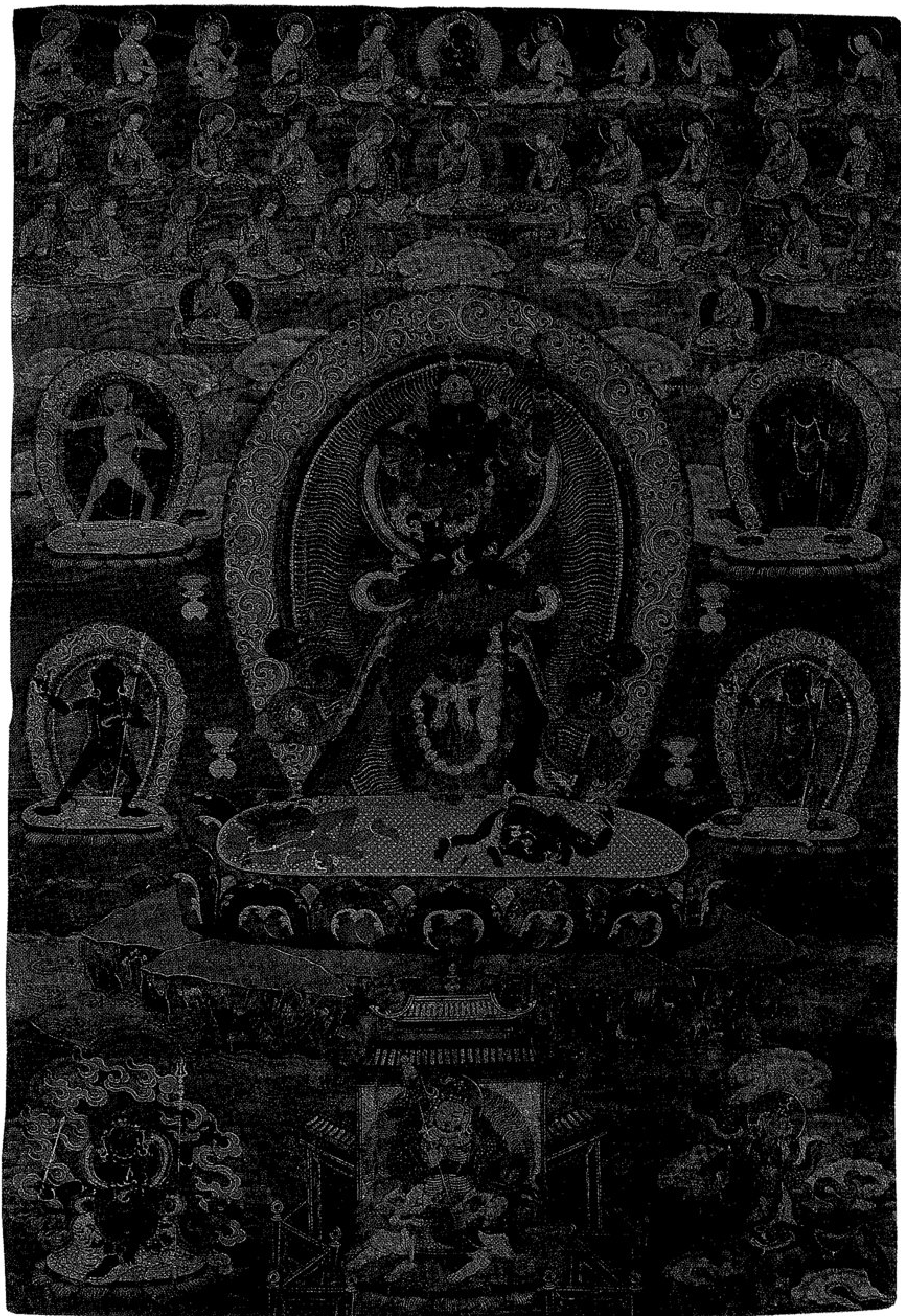




Fig. 191. Rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-grags-pa. Drawing. Drawn by the living 'Bri-bris painter sMyung-la Ye-shes-'jam-dbyangs. Courtesy of Ngawang Tsering of Nurla.



Fig. 192. sPang-rgyan (Gentian) flowers. Xylograph illustration. From 'Jam-dpal-rdo-rje, Materia Medica of Tibet.



Pl. 64. Cakrasamvara (bDe-mchog), with a lama lineage of 'Bri-gung-pa masters. The last figure in the lineage (no. 34) is dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin-phrin-las-rnam-rgyal (b. 1770), 28th abbot of 'Bri-gung, and the second to last (no. 33) is dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin-chos-kyi-nyi-ma (1755-1792, Chung-tshang). Thangka, Central Tibet ('Bri-gung?), late 18th or early 19th c., 58 x 40 cm. Private collection, Cologne.



Pl. 65. White Amitāyus according to the Grub-pa'i-rgyal-mo tradition, surrounded by a mixed bKa'-brgyud-pa (but mainly 'Brug-pa?) teaching lineage. Thangka, "Ladakh," ca. late 16th or early 17th c., 90.5 x 70.5 cm. Essen collection. Published: G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989); = no. II 284. The patron was one "sprang-po Ngag-dbang-rnam-rgyal."

South and Southeast Tibet, and Bordering District

In the southern districts of Tibet regional styles also evolved. In Dwags-po, for instance, a great painter by the name of Thing-pa founded a school of art, although its stylistic affiliations are not definitely known, and in any case it seems not to have lasted very long.[768] In this and the adjoining regions of southern dBus a number of other artists flourished whose names are listed in a modern Bhutanese source, probably because of the influence they had on a painting tradition in Bhutan. They included: sprul-sku 'Phreng-kha-ba [dPal-ldan-blo-gros-bzang-po, ca. 1500–ca. 1570], Lho-brag sprul-sku Nor-bu-rgya-mtsho, sprul-sku Lab-smyon of Kong-po, mDzad dKon-mchog of dPal-shod, mDzes-pa-skyid of E, and Kong-po bla-ma sMin-gling-chos-bzang.[769]

E District

In the nearby district of E (or g.Ye), an influential tradition of the modern sMan-ris called the E-bris (or g.Ye-ris) became established. This district, which lay between Dwags-po and Yar-klungs, was mainly nomadic. It did not possess much fertile land for growing barley, but it did have some deposits of gold. Its lord was from the ancient family of Lha rGya-ri, a branch of the ancient Tibetan royalty.[770]

As early as the late 1500s the E-pa dKon-mchog-phan-bde had distinguished himself highly as an artist, and in the 17th and 18th centuries artists from E district, especially sculptors, continue to be mentioned in the sources, some of them being active also as far away as in Khams.[771] Closer to E in Central Tibet, the ruler Pho-lha-nas bSod-nams-stobs-rgyas in the 1730s patronized outstanding sculptors from E when commissioning a set of excellent stone three-dimensional maṇḍala divine palaces (*dkyil 'khor blos bslang*) for the Lha-ldan rtse-mo temple. These were meant to serve as trustworthy examples for future generations.[772]

The painting tradition of E evidently descended from the old sMan-ris, and at least one author implied that it played a decisive role in the formation of the style which became most prevalent in dBus province by the 20th century.[773] Shakabpa (followed by the recent author Ye-shes-shes-rab) used "*e ris*" as a synonym for the modern sMan-ris of Central Tibet, as opposed to the mKhyen-ris, which he glossed as the "*gzhung ris*" or "[central] government style."[774] The latter gloss is, however, probably incorrect, unless it refers to the second half of the 17th century, the period when the mKhyen-ris artists received substantial central government (dGa'-ldan pho-brang) sponsorship because of the interest taken in their tradition by the 5th Dalai Lama.[775] (By contrast, the modern Karma bka'-brgyud scholar mKhan-po 'Khrang-gu Rin-po-che employed the term *gzhung ris* ["central government style"] as a broad term for this modern Central Tibetan sMan-ris, as opposed to the Karma-sgar-bris.[776])

One later upholder of the E-bris tradition may have been the above-mentioned mDzes-pa-skyid of E, whose name is at first sight female.[777] In the early 20th century, the artists of this tradition were in high demand for work on restoration projects in southern dBus.[778] By then the E-bris artists may well have already become leading exponents of the style that some have termed the "dGe-lugs-pa international school."[779]

Bhutan

In the southern borderland kingdom of Bhutan, the first Zhabs-drung, Ngag-dbang-rnam-rgyal (1594–1651) "is supposed to have included painting among his many talents, but none of his creations seem to have survived the numerous fires that plagued Bhutan during the 18th and 19th centuries."[780] Ngag-dbang-rnam-rgyal is further said to have invited from the 'Brug-pa monastic seat of Rwa-lung in Tibet the sMan-bris master painters sprul-sku Phun-tshogs, Chos-mdzad Lu-pa, and sprul-sku mGon-po (who was also an accomplished sculptor).[781] Also in this period (the first half of the 17th century), the artist sprul-sku Mi-pham-chos-'phel is said to have introduced into Bhutan from Tibet a style of painting that reputedly incorporated both sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris manners.[782] Another influential painter of the 17th century was the Bhutanese master Grags-pa-rgya-mtsho alias Sangs-rgyas-

grags-pa (1646–1719). On him, E. G. Smith writes:[783]

> Grags-pa-rgya-mtsho ... was the most talented Bhutanese pupil of the great refugee scholar Gtsaṅ Mkhan-chen Dpal-ldan-rgya-mtsho (1610–1684). His talents as an artist attracted the not especially welcome attention of the Bhutanese ruler Bstan-'dzin-rab-rgyas; and he was pressed into service to design and assume the responsibility for production of an enormous embroidered tanka, the Gos-sku Mthoṅ-grol-chen-mo or Mthoṅ-ba-raṅ-grol of Punakha (Spuṅs-thaṅ). This project was begun in 1689 and completed in 1692. It was this tanka that served as the inspiration and model for at least one similar work, the Zhabs-druṅ tanka of 1753. Grags-pa-rgya-mtsho was then immediately charged with the difficult task of building and painting the frescos of the Hermitage of Spa-gro Stag-tshaṅ (1692–93).

The main Bhutanese styles evidently were mainly branches of the sMan-ris, although they were also influenced by later stylistic currents in eastern and central Tibet. The eighth rGyal-dbang 'Brug-chen Kun-gzigs-chos-kyi-snang-ba (1768–1822) is said to have worked in the sMan-ris style.[784] In iconometry, the tradition of sMan-thang-pa was well represented: the 9th rJe mkhan-po, Shākya-rin-chen (1710–1759), wrote a brief manual for beginners in which he proclaimed at both beginning and end his adherence to sMan-bla-don-grub's tradition.[785] Another manual of painting by a Bhutanese author also lists a few of the most influential artists of that country: 'Jam-dbyangs dPal-ldan-rgya-mtsho (gTsang-mkhan-chen, 1610–1684), whose style was influential in the time of the first Zhabs-drung; gDung-mkhar slob-dpon 'Brug bSam-'grub and Kha-ling slob-dpon bsTan-'dzin, who were both disciples of sprul-sku 'Brug bsTan-'dzin[786]; and then later A-'grod Nor-bu-don-'grub.[787]

In addition to painting masters who learned their skills from skilled teachers, there were also religious masters active in Bhutan who produced images by more wonderful, seemingly miraculous means. These included the gter-ston Padma-gling-pa and rgyal-sras bsTan-'dzin-rab-rgyas.[788]

sKyid-rong and Eastern mNga'-ris

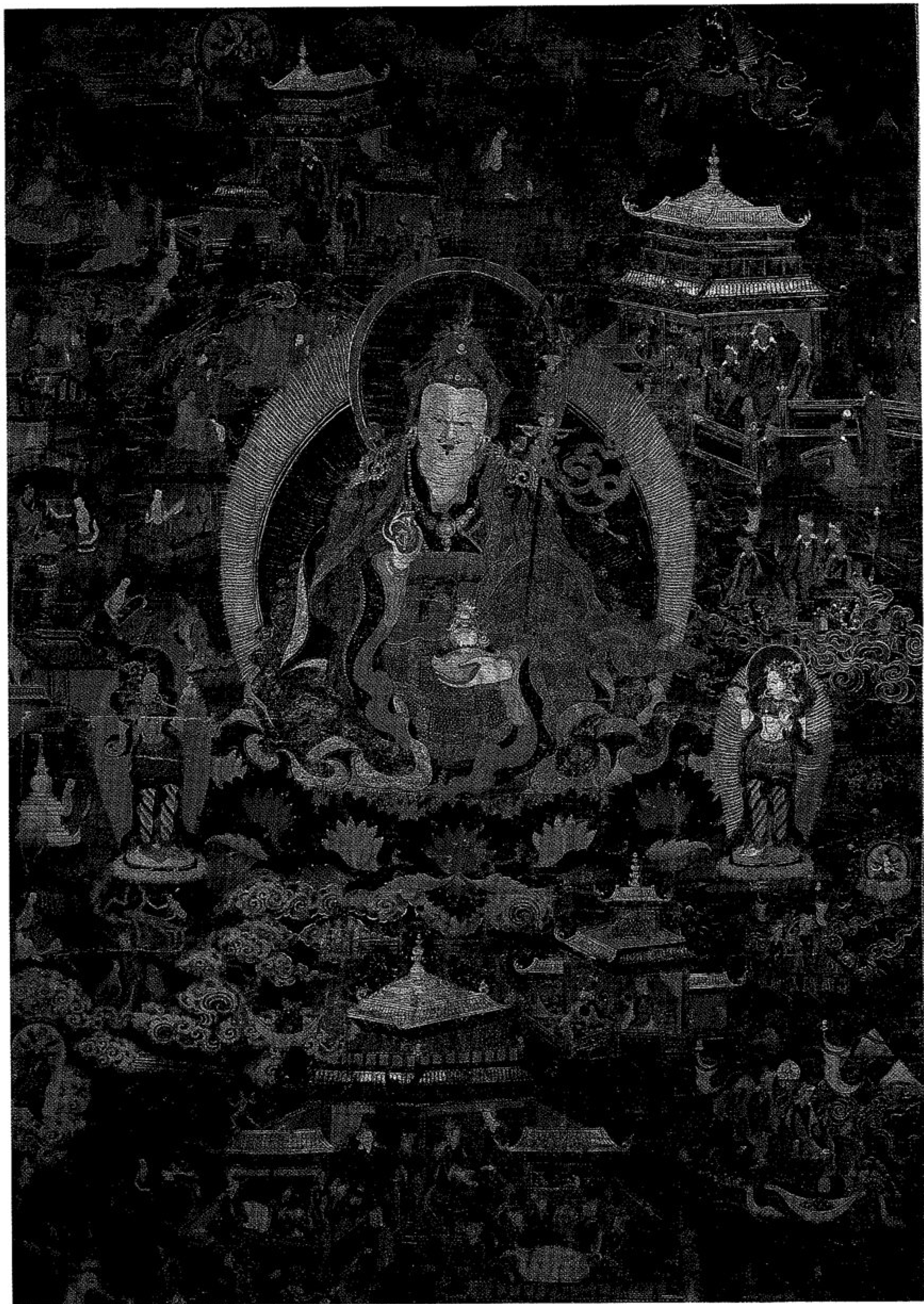
Kun-bzang-phrin-las-dbang-phyug of sKyid-rong

One of the outstanding artists who was active in eastern mNga'-ris, western gTsang, and in the nearby Nepal Himalayan regions such as Yol-mo (Helambu) during the late 18th and early 19th centuries was Kun-bzang-phrin-las-dbang-phyug (1772–1812), older brother of the Brag-dkar-rta-so sprul-sku Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug (1775–1837). Though he started off life as a lama and was deeply involved in religious practice, he devoted much of his energy to the production of religious art.

The artist's biography—which we owe to his brother the Brag-dkar-rta-so sprul-sku—is entitled *mKhas mchog bla ma dam pa kun bzang phrin las dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa nyi ma'i snye ma*. It survives as an dbu-med manuscript of thirty-seven folios that was recently discovered in Nepal.[789] In the following pages I have extracted from this life history a few of the most important references to his career as a painter.

Kun-bzang-phrin-las-dbang-phyug was born in 1772 in sKyid-grong, the southwestern Tibetan border region closest to the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal. As a boy he was recognized as the rebirth of the bla-ma rDo-dmar-ba Kun-bzang-'gyur-med-lhun-grub, a master who had also been highly skilled as a painter and sculptor (3a.5). As a boy he used to amuse himself by sitting alone and fashioning little images (5b.4). His earliest formal work began in 1786 when he was asked by the painter Tshe-dbang-dngos-grub to help paint several thangkas for the shrine room of sGar 'Ba'-ro-tshang. The three thangkas he then executed, which were the first thangkas he painted in his life, portrayed the Buddha Śākyamuni and attendant figures (9b.4). Later Tshe-dbang-dngos-grub reported to the mchod-dpon Rin-chen-bstan-'dzin-rdo-rje that the young boy was doing quite well at painting (10a.2).

In 1789 Kun-bzang-phrin-las-dbang-phyug painted a few more scroll paintings, including a depiction of the deities of the Thugs-rje-chen-po 'Gro-ba-kun-grol cycle (10b.1), and two thangkas



Pl. 66. Padmasambhava, with episodes from his life based on the Padma bka' thang. Thangka, Yol-mo (Helambu), late 18th or mid 19th c.?, 77 x 54 cm. Private collection, Cologne. Patron: Rig-'dzin 'Gyur-med-rdo-rje sngags-'chang gSang-sngags-bstan-'dzin-'od-gsal-snying-po-u-rgyan-phun-tshogs, born in an iron-bird year (1741 or 1801?). Painted in his 51st year (iron-pig, 1791 or 1851?) at the Yol-mo retreat gSang-sngags-chos-gling, in memory of the patron's father, who was also a lay rNying-ma master.

of the peaceful and wrathful cycles of sGar 'Ba'-ro (?) (13a.1). In 1790 he painted the "front-deities" of a manuscript of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* (13a.3). In 1792 he had to go to Yol-mo (Helambu) where he painted the murals and decorative woodwork (*shing rtsi*) of the monastery Padma'i-gling. In this connection he also composed a sort of record (*dkar chag*) commemorating this work (13b.3). As this work coincided with the outbreak of the Tibet-Gurkha War, he was forced to interrupt his painting and flee by way of the Gangs-la to the high valley of Glang-phrang (Glang-thang), where he stayed a few months until things quieted down. Later that year he returned with his brother to perform the consecration of the newly built assembly hall in Yol-mo.

In 1793 he went to sMu-lug Chos-dkar-gling (southwest Kyirong?) where under the patronage of the tantric yogi bDe-chen-lags he painted a protector thangka (*mgon thang*) depicting the fierce deity Legs-ldan-nag-po and his retinue (15a.2). In the next year, working together with bSod-nams-dbang-ldan, a master painter from Grwa-phu Chos-gling,[790] he painted for his brother a thangka depicting the teachers of the *Lam zab bla ma'i rnal 'byor* together with another painting (15b.1). In 1796 he was obliged to go to the monastery sKyid-grong bSam-gtan-gling to paint the murals and decorative woodwork in the temple. There he also painted a thangka of the Buddha and the Sixteen Elders for the use of the monastic community (16b.5). In 1797 on the high holiday of Sa-ga zla-ba (the fifteenth day of the 4th lunar month) he went with his brother to the temple of the 'Phags-pa Wa-ti in sKyid-grong and there offered a layer of gold paint to the face of the main image (*zhal ser*), repainted the eyes (*spyan dbye*), and so forth. (18a.3).

In 1803 at the request of sMan-sgom-rje, he painted five thangkas, including two of wrathful figures on a base of red satin (? *gos ya sher*) and three normal full-color thangkas (*tshon thang*). The latter three depicted Tshe-dpag-med rDo-rje rgya-mdud, Rig-'dzin-rje (Kaḥ-thog rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu, 1698–1755) surrounded by the guru lineage of the *gSang khrid*, and the paradise of Zangs-mdog-dpal-ri according to the visions of the lamas Sog-bzlog-pa and Rig-'dzin-rje (21a.3).

In 1804 he participated in the funeral rites and accompanying activities following the death of his master sMan-sgom-rje, including the building of a reliquary stūpa and the painting of a thangka depicting Padmasambhava surrounded by lineage masters of the short transmission on one of the corpse shrouds (*spur ras*), as well as a black thangka (*nag thang*) of dPal-mgon Ma-ning (23b.2).

One of the most interesting passages of the biography describes his painting three wonderful sets of the eighty-four mahāsiddhas (also referred to in this biography as the "hundred siddhas" *grub brgya*) and mentions the sources he based these depictions upon. Two sets he painted on the walls of the Byams-sprin gTsug-lag-khang (an old temple very near Kyirong, classified as one of the four *yang-'dul* temples erected in Srong-btsan-sgam-po's time), and one set he painted in the form of thangkas. From among the various traditions existing in Tibet for portraying the mahāsiddhas (including those based on the praises by rDo-rje-gdan-pa), he mainly followed that of Jo-nang Tāranātha as preserved on the walls of the Theg-mchog He-ru-ka temple at the monastery Jo-nang rTag-brtan-phun-tshogs-gling. In particular, he followed for the most part a written guide for painting (*bris yig*) entitled the *Bris yig legs bshad gser thur* that Rig-'dzin-rje (=Kaḥ-thog rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu) had composed after discovering a similar, slightly incomplete work by Tāranātha among the dust and sweepings at the monastery of Jo-nang (then already converted to the dGe-lugs-pa and partly fallen into disrepair).[791] In this he departed slightly from received painting examples (*bris dpe*), and the resulting work was "like a [new] standard for the manual arts" (*bzo rig pa'i tshad lta bu*), his own pure way of painting wholely unmixed with that of others, and a veritable feast for the eyes.[792] These amazing artistic skills of his were said to have arisen purely as the result of his practice in a previous lifetime, and not through his studies under any expert painter (24b.3–6).

In about late 1806 he was obliged to go to the renovation of the Byams-sprin gTsug-lag-khang

and participate in the painting of its inner and outer murals (25b.3). In the fourth lunar month of the next year (1807) he took leave to visit his ailing master mDo-chen-pa, who passed away not long afterwards.

In 1810 he painted a thangka of the *bKa' brgyad* and the *dPal dgu* for his younger brother Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug. In 1811 he was requested (again by his brother) to paint a set of the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava (*gu ru mtshan brgyad*). They immediately borrowed from La-stod Don-gling (Las-lung Don-grub-gling in La-stod Lho?) as one example a thangka of the Eight Manifestations painted by the great master Rig-'dzin-rje Yol-mo-ba bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu himself, and they also borrowed a set of paintings depicting this same series of figures from sPo-rong (29a). Then Kun-bzang-phrin-las-dbang-phyug and a group of assistants began the work on an auspicious day, after the performance of a blessing ritual in which the artists, their tools and the cloth supports were consecrated. Soon thereafter he fell seriously ill, though he continued to carry out very energetically the planning of the pictures. For the actual painting work he was assisted by his nephews Karma-lags and rDor-nam, and the painter Phrin-las-rgyal-mtshan from Yol-mo. He completed the project in the fall, at the end of the Khrum month (which would have been the middle of the eighth lunar month) (29b.2). At the end of the 'Go month he received a visit from his older brother, who offered him ritual blessings and also gave him in return for his painting work of the set of the Eight Manifestations fifteen ounces (of silver?) and a complete set of clothing. His brother showed him, together with several other thangkas, the main thangka of the set (*gtso thang*) complete with brocade mounting (*gong gshams*), at which Kun-bzang-phrin-las-dbang-phyug expressed his pleasure.[793]

After completing those thangkas he was invited to Klong-smad (between Brag-dkar-rta-so and Kyirong) for drawing in *lañcana* script the Sanskrit mantras of a great māṇi-wheel and it temple. These were his final works as an artist (29b.2) as he died soon afterwards at the relatively young age of thirty-nine or forty.

Mustang, Thak Khola, and Dol-po

Some recent painting traditions in Nepal's upper Kali Gandaki Valley and Mustang (Glo-bo) have also been made the subject of a modern study.[794] These are Tibetan cultural areas that have been under Gorkha rule since the 18th century but traditionally included in Tibetan geographical classifications within eastern mNga'-ris. The high valleys of Dol-po to the west of Mustang were also the home of painters in centuries past. The Dol-po artist Kun-dga'-'bum was active in Mustang at the building of the Byams-pa and Thub-chen lha-khang in the mid 1400s. He was the ancestor of the local religious master rNam-grol-bzang-po (b. 1504) of eastern Dol-po.[795]

The above lineage has continued down to the present up to the artists of Dol-po Ting-kyu, Karma-bstan-'dzin (b. 1932) and his son, bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu (b. 1971).[796] A side branch of their family established itself on the sPang-lung farm (now in ruins) near Ting-kyu. The artists there (fl. ca. 17th–18th c.?) were called dpon sPang-

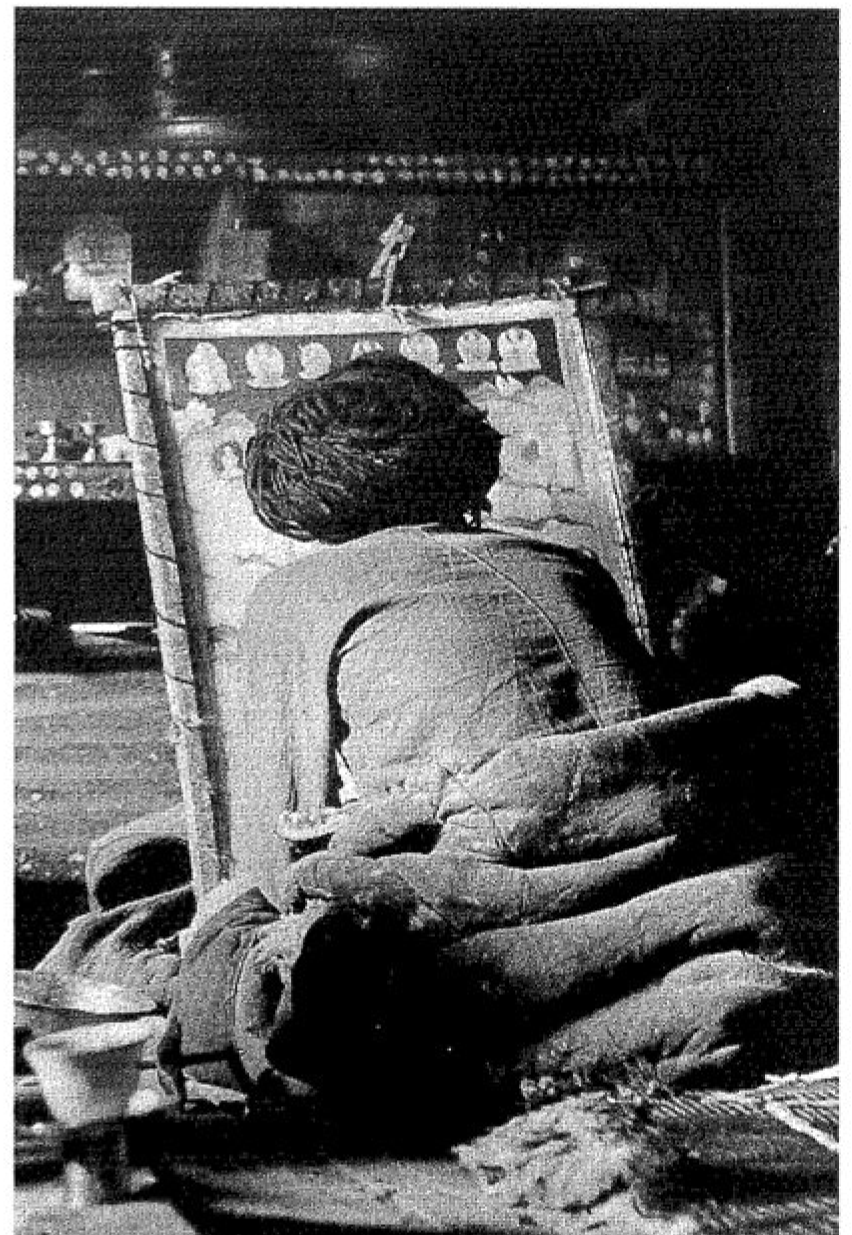


Fig. 193. Dolpo painter at work. After D. Snellgrove and H. Richardson (1969), pp. 164-5.



Fig. 194

lung.[797] A Bon-po painting (ca. 18th c., from Dol-po) by the painter dPang-lung Nges-don survives in a modern collection.[798]

Two other more recent painters of Dol-po and their works were photographed in the 1960s by D. Snellgrove and C. Jest.[799] The painting traditions of northwest Nepal will no doubt receive more attention in the coming years as they become more accessible, just as the artists and recent painting traditions of the more open Sherpa region of the Nepal Himalaya have been studied in the last two decades.[800]



Figs. 194 and 195. Mahāsiddhas. Drawing by the contemporary Dolpo artist bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu following old examples from sPang-lung artists.

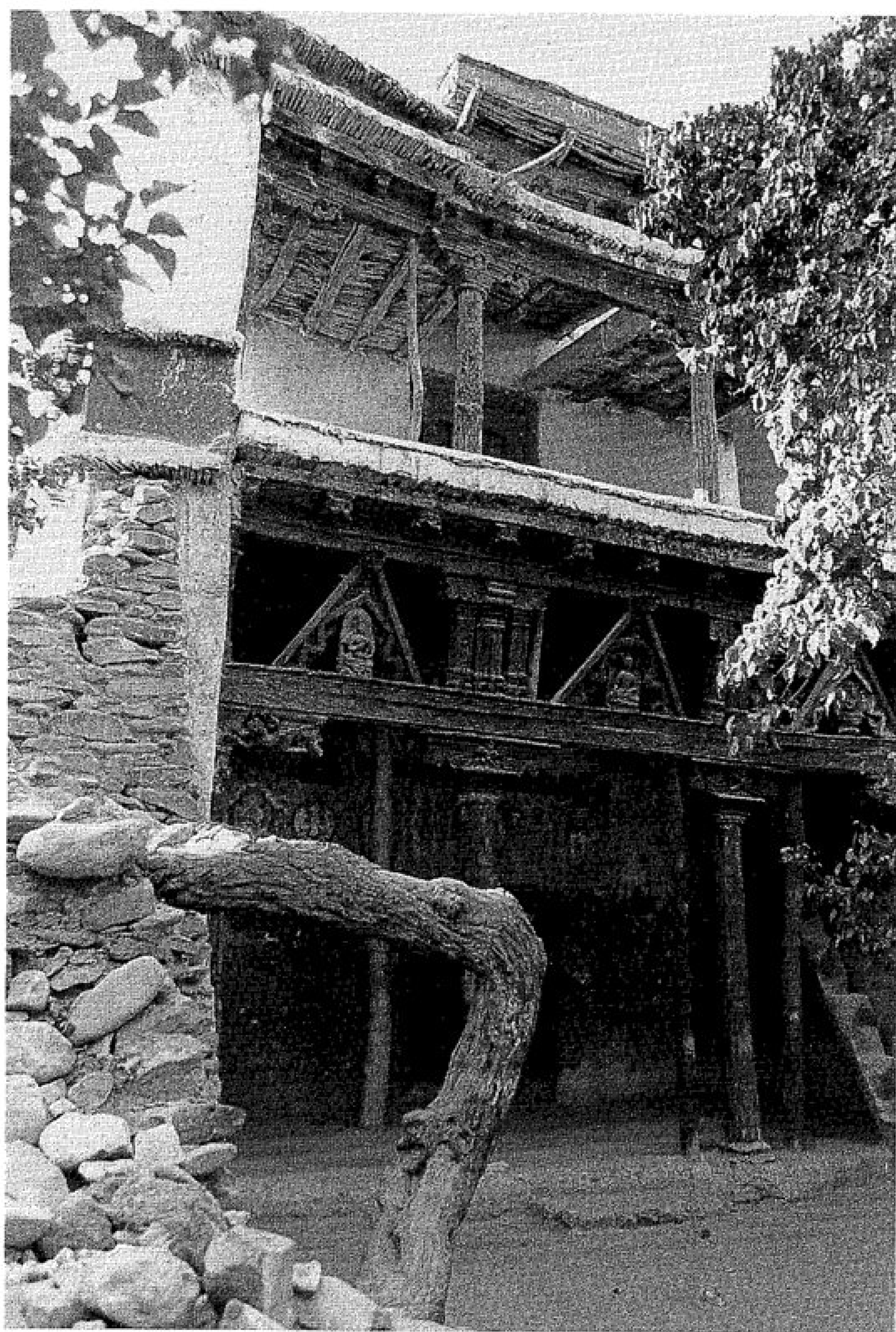


Fig. 196. Alchi, the gSum-rtsegs temple. Photograph D. Jackson, 1979.

Ladakh

In addition to being a region in which examples of the 'Bri-gung styles of painting survive (such as at Lamayuru and Phiwang), Ladakh is also a very important site for earlier and later western Tibetan painting styles. It is the location of that great jewel of early Kashmiri-influenced western-Tibetan painting, the monastery of Alchi (founded 11th–12th c.), on which an extensive and still expanding secondary literature exists. And it has remained a home for Buddhist artists during the many generations that have intervened since then. The painting of Ladakh, like that of other parts of western Tibet (mNga'-ris), could be studied in its own right.[801]

In recent times, as probably for the past three or four centuries, the art practiced there reflects the stylistic trends at the great home monasteries in central Tibet where the monk-artists went for advanced study. For monks and monasteries of the predominant dGe-lugs-pa tradition this has meant absorption of the sMan-ris styles, especially in their later forms as developed at the great Tashilhunpo monastery in Shigatse, the seat of the Paṇ-chen Lamas. This was the head monastery (*gdan sa*) where the dGe-lugs-pa monks from mNga'-ris went, if possible, for full ordination.[802]

D. Klimburg-Salter has described the new central-Tibetan inspired styles in western Tibet in the 17th and 18th centuries as follows:[803]

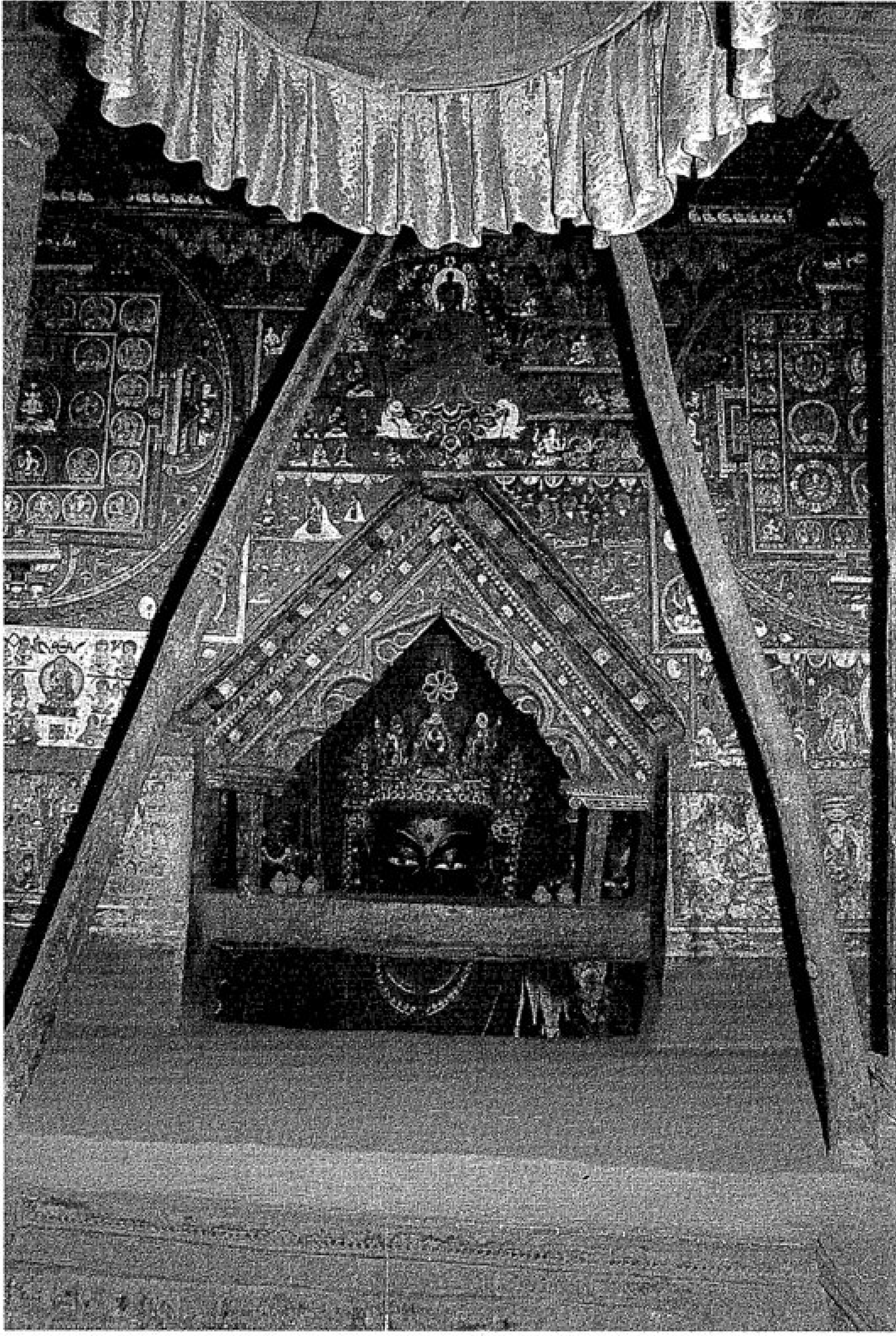


Fig. 197. Murals and head of statue within the upper floor of the gSum-rtsegs Temple, Alchi, Ladakh. Photograph D. Jackson, 1979.

A new style emerged, combining elements of the earlier regional styles (Smith 1970). This style ... characterized by a new figure style, Chinese landscape elements, and a palette including intense pinks and light greens, became associated with the Lhasa or Central Tibetan style, which remains popular in contemporary Tibetan art.

Ri-rdzong sras-sprul Rin-po-che

One of the most interesting painters to be born in Ladakh during the last century or two was the lama Ri-rdzong sras-sprul Rin-po-che Blo-bzang-tshul-khrims-chos-'phel (1864–1927). He was born in the To-go-che family of Yang-thang. Originally a monk and lama of the dGe-lugs-pa monastery of Ri-rdzong, he went to central Tibet for ordination. Then he went to Tsha-ba dPa'-shod in Khams, where he learned poetics, gram-



Fig. 198. Ri-rdzong sras-sprul. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 1075 (a 537a).

mar, etc. After that he returned to central Tibet and continued his religious studies under many masters of various schools. At some point he disrobed and began to live as a lay tantric master. He had many talents, being famed as a real paṇḍita, and he produced many works of religious art. He was also particularly gifted as a musician and poet. Later in life he taught actively in lower Ladakh (*la dwags gsham phyogs*). A number of his writings (amounting to some three hundred and fifty-eight pages) can still be printed from the blocks at Ri-rdzong.[804] He is featured among a series of recent rNying-ma lineage-transmitter lamas published xylographically together with a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897–1956?).

gTsang (Tashilhunpo)

According to one of its most prominent modern exponents, the master Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, the main gTsang tradition of painting (gTsang-bris) began in the mid 1400s with the work of sMan-bla-don-grub at Tashilhunpo near Shigatse, and with the early sMan-ris tradition as it was maintained by many of the latter's disciples in gTsang.[805] This tradition was said to have been passed down for two centuries to become in the 17th century the main basis for the style of the great gTsang-pa dbu-mdzad Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho (sometimes called "the sMan-gsar-ba"), who belonged to the Chos-sbugs dormitory at Tashilhunpo.[806] The names of many of the subsequent main painters from the tradition at Tashilhunpo have also been preserved, and a number of fine gTsang-bris paintings have been published.[807]

During the beginning of the lifetime of the 2nd Paṇ-chen Blo-bzang-ye-shes (1663–1737) (who is by another way of reckoning also counted as the "fifth"), Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho seems to have been still active. A modern history of Tashilhunpo mentions murals of the great display of marvels and other themes in the Bla-brang Nyi-'od-chen-po built by the 2nd ("or 5th") Paṇ-chen. The main painters were said to be dbu-mdzad mKhos-khang Blo-bzang-nor-bu and "sMan-thang-pa" (i.e. the great sMan-gsar-ba, Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho?).[808]

Two of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's main successors who flourished in the subsequent period (late 1600s and early 1700s) were dbu-che sPel-rkyang rje-drung Blo-bzang-rnam-rgyal and dbu-che Dar-rgyas-pa rGyal-mtshan-bzang-po. Murals by the dbu-che sPel-rkyang rje-drung depicting the *dPag bsam 'khri shing* cycle of Avadānas, the Sixteen Elders travelling over the water, Tsong-kha-pa's five visions (*gzigs pa lnga ldan*) and the pure realm of g.Yu-lo-bkod-pa all survive at Tashilhunpo on the walls of the mChod-dkyil Tshom-chen assembly hall. Examples of the work of dbu-che Dar-rgyas-pa rGyal-mtshan-bzang-po are to be found in the same assembly hall on the wall behind the main throne (here are depicted eighty portrayals of Tsong-kha-pa, *tsong kha brgyad cu*). The same artist was responsible for the depictions of two pure realms (including Sukhāvatī, bDe-ba-can), the guru lineage of the *Lam rim*, and the successive rebirths of the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-ches, all of which can still be admired today.[809] Moreover he is also said to have been responsible for some paintings in the temple enshrining the reliquary stūpa of Paṇ-chen Blo-bzang-ye-shes (d. 1737).[810]



Fig. 199. The Paṇ-chen dPal-ldan-ye-shes. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), p. 883.

Fig. 200. rTse-gdong monastery, an important center of artisans in gTsang. A modern drawing. After Chogay Trichen Rinpoche (1979), ill. 8.

Early in the lifetime of the 3rd Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che dPal-ldan-ye-shes (1738–1780) (otherwise reckoned as the "sixth") dbu-che Dar-rgyas-pa rGyal-mtshan-bzang-po probably continued to be active. Then (about two or three generations after him) there appeared the outstanding artist dbu-che rTse-gdong Tshong-shar-ba. He is said to have decorated with his paintings the reliquary chapels of both dPal-ldan-ye-shes (d. 1780) and the next (i.e. 4th) Paṇ-chen, Blo-bzang-bstan-pa'i-nyi-ma (1782–1853), though this would have been impossible unless he painted in the first chapel long after the death of the lama. In any case these chapels and their contents were completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution.

In the period of the 5th Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che Blo-bzang-bstan-pa'i-dbang-phyug (1855–1882) (otherwise reckoned as the "eighth") the two main painters were: dge-slong Kun-dga'-lags of the Tashilhunpo rTse-khang dormitory and dbu-che rGya-khang-spag-ra dBang-'dus. The learned monk-artist dge-slong Kun-dga'-lags painted the mural of the story of the Bodhisattva rTag-tu-ngu upstairs in the Ba-so dormitory in the residence of the master sKyabs-dbyings sMan-ri-ba. He also executed the murals of the temple housing the reliquary stūpa of the same Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che (d. 1882), though these were obliterated in the Cultural Revolution. By contrast, extensive paintings by his contemporary the dbu-che rGya-khang-spag-ra dBang-'dus still survive on the walls of the great Maitreya temple (Byams-khang chen-mo) erected in 1914.

The lifetime of the 6th Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che dGe-legs-rnam-rgyal (1883–1937) (otherwise reckoned as the "ninth") saw the appearance of a succession of great painters: dbu-che Zla-ba-tshe-ring from the sPor-tog dormitory, dbu-che sprul-sku-lags of the Ba-so dormitory, dbu-che mNga'-ris-pa bSod-nams-don-grub, dbu-che rTa-mgrin-rgyal-po, and rgan Nyag-rong-ba of the rGya dormitory. They too contributed their skills to the painting of the walls of the great Maitreya temple.[811] But no trace of their work in the reliquary chapel of Paṇ-chen dGe-legs-rnam-rgyal (d. 1937) has survived, owing to its destruction during the Cultural Revolution.[812]

During the youth of the 7th Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1938–1987?) (otherwise counted as the "tenth"), the two main painters at Tashilhunpo were dbu-che Chos-dar-lags from the bZhad-pa dormitory (who had the rank of *las tshan pa*) and dbu-che Shi-log-lags (ca. 1919–1992, who had the rank of *drung skor*). The first died during the Cultural Revolution, and not much is known about his background. Shi-log-

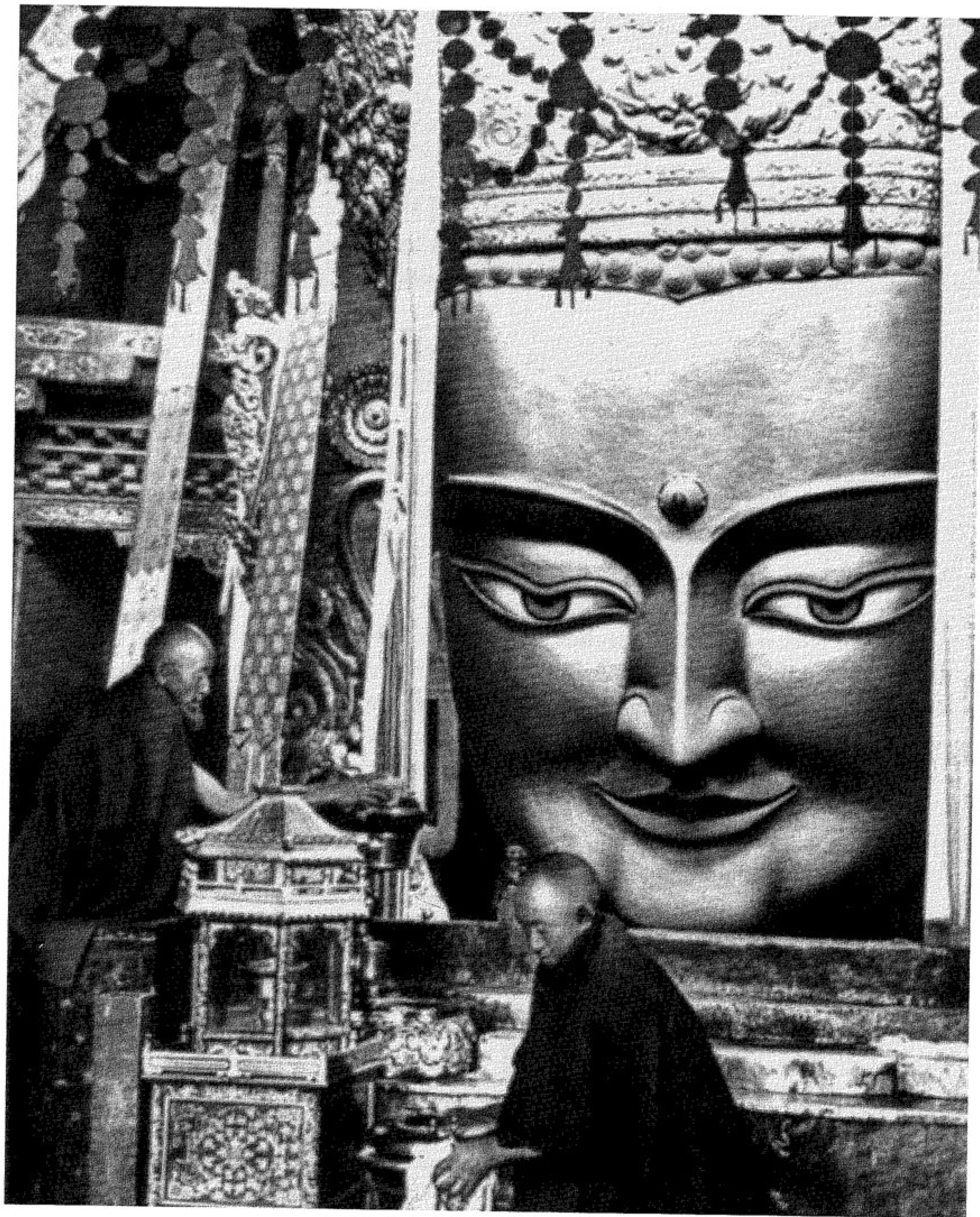


Fig. 201. The Great Maitreya at Tashilhunpo. Statue, gilt copper, 1914. After Tibet Today, p. 82.

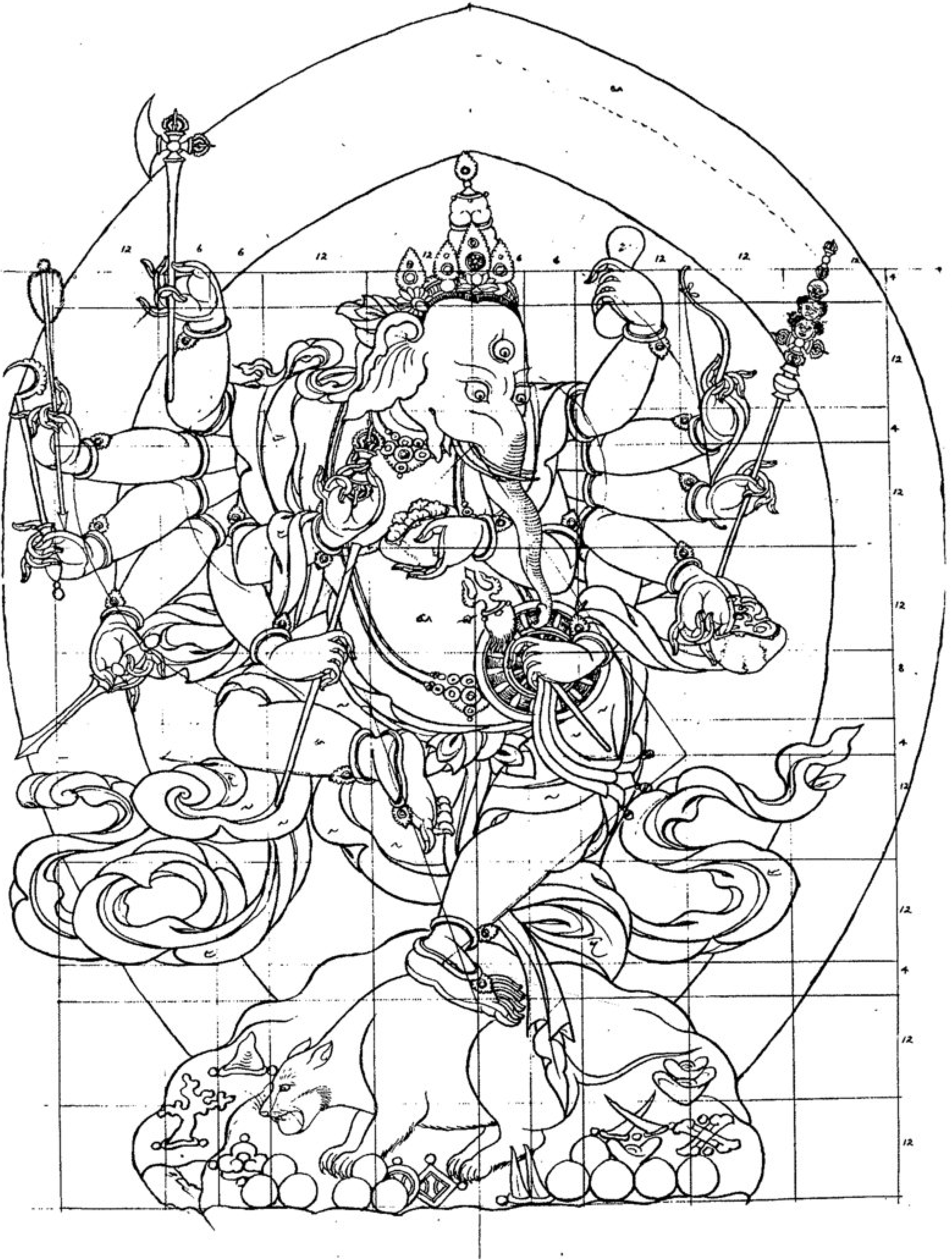


Fig. 202. The proportions of Tshogs-bdag (Gaṇapati). Drawing. After Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs (1993), p. 83.

lags married the daughter of Jo-lags dBang-'dus-lags of bDe-skyid-gling village in rTse-gdong district. The latter was the disciple of Tshe-dbang-lags of rTse-gdong bDe-skyid-gling, the student of the above-mentioned famous master dbu-che rTse-gdong Tshong-shar-ba (fl. 1850s?).[813] He was very active as a court artist for the late 7th Paṇ-chen Rin-po-che, and he served for instance as *dbu-che* for the making of the great brocade image of Amitābha at Tashilhunpo during the 1950s. Both Chos-dar-lags and Shi-log-lags were teachers of Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, the main informant for the above account on the gTsang-bris.[814]

* * *

The divisions into recent geographical styles mentioned above were by no means hard and fast.[815] Although certain centers had their own schools—sometimes functioning like an artist's guild with a local monopoly, as in Lhasa—other styles were also occasionally found nearby in the same geographical area, such as in a monastery of a school which traditionally fostered its own artistic traditions (as, for example, in the case of mTshur-phu or 'Bri-gung in dBus). Also, one and the same painter could be invited to go and work in various districts. It goes without saying that the thangka painter's chief finished product—i.e. the sacred thangka scroll-paintings—were afterwards highly portable no matter where they had been first painted.

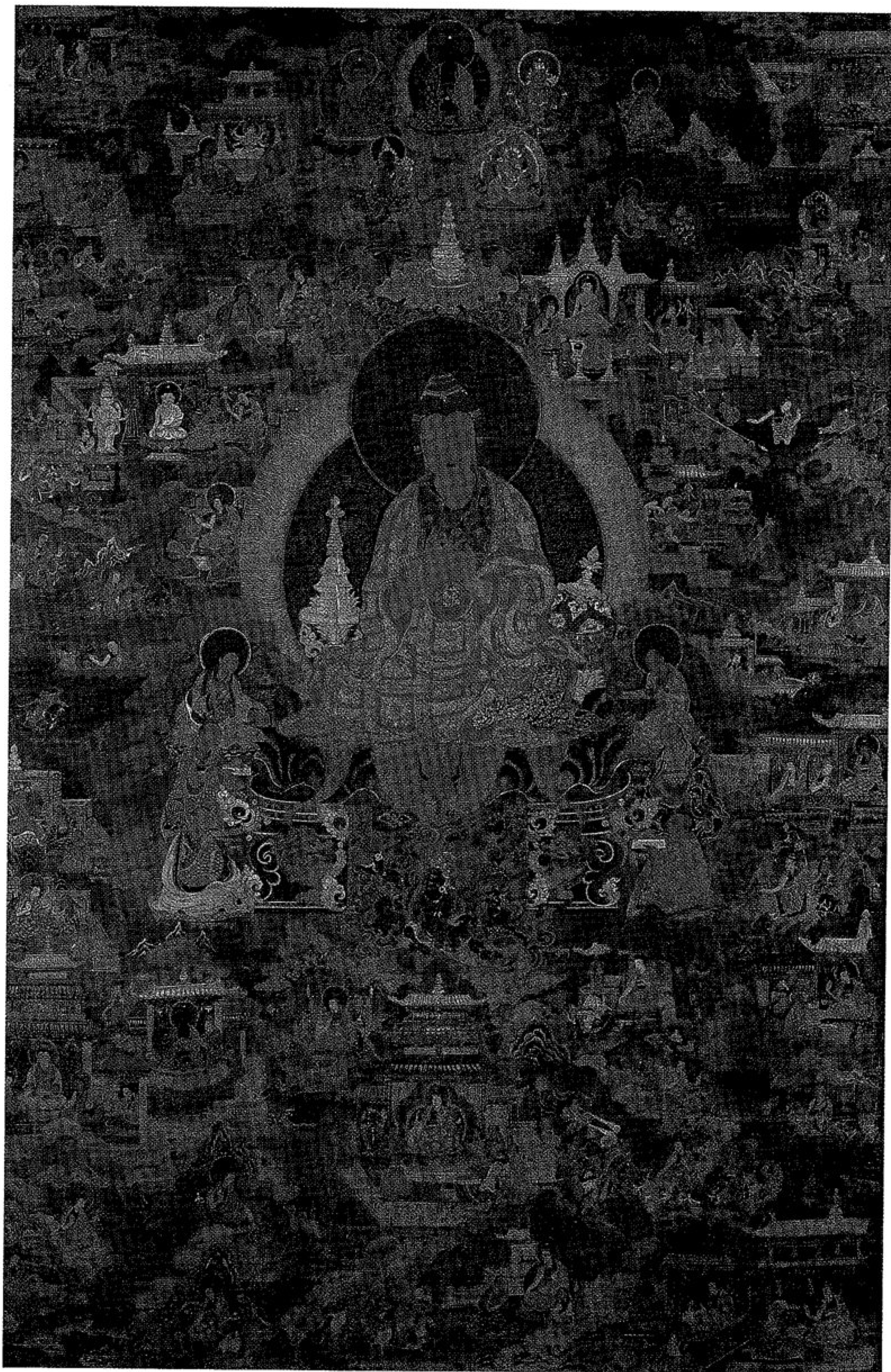
By the 19th and 20th centuries, certain districts of Tibet had become renowned for their accomplished painters and sculptors, such as the district E (or g.Ye) in southern dBus, rTse-gdong in eastern gTsang,[816] Reb-gong (especially Seng-ge-gshong) in A-mdo, and Nyag-rong, rDza-khog and Chab-mdo (especially Kar-shod) in Khams.[817] In the sGa-pa district of northwest Khams, whose capital was Jyekundo (sKye-rgu-mdo), the village of mDzo-nyag grong-pa was famous for its skillful artists.[818] Moreover, in dBus and gTsang provinces of central Tibet, two very influential groups of artists had established themselves at the courts of the Dalai Lama in Lhasa[819] and the Paṇ-chen Lama in Tashilhunpo, as mentioned above. The workshops of these prestigious court artists organized themselves in artists' guilds with a local monopoly.[820] These traditions both descended primarily from sMan-ris lineages, whether old or new, and the artists from Lhasa could easily identify a painting by a Shigatse artist, and vice versa. The early-20th-century Lhasa style, for instance, was overall much lighter. For the coloration of clouds, its artists used only blue and green, whereas red- and orange-tinged clouds were also possibilities for gTsang artists. Lhasa artists preferred perfectly balanced compositions, while gTsang-pa artists often sketched compositions that were not symmetrical.[821]

Important examples of work by the foremost artists from dBus can be found in the successively built chapels of the Potala. For instance, in 1756 the murals of the Phun-tshogs-bkod-pa chapel in the Potala were executed at the instructions of the 7th Dalai Lama. These murals, executed by the best artists of the time, included many paintings of legendary pure lands, as well as of historical holy places and monasteries.[822] Much more recently the gSer-sdong dGe-legs-'dod-'jo Temple, which housed the reliquary stūpa of the 13th Dalai Lama (d. 1933), contained murals which depicted the latter's biography in some detail. Even shown are the master's meetings with Russian political emissaries in Peking and with British officials in India![823] Many painters from gTsang also came to Lhasa at this time to paint the walls in this memorial chapel, and it is said that after this, the artistic practices of dBus and gTsang painters began to become more mixed.[824]

The influence of the main centers of art in central Tibet spread to allied circles far to the east and west, even as far as parts of Guge and Ladakh (to say nothing of to the even more distant Mongolia and China), carried along by the rising tide of dGe-lugs-pa monastic expansion and, from the mid 1600s, by the dGa'-ldan pho-brang government's established political might and prestige. In gTsang in particular, other minor political and economic centers such as Gyantse,[825] Lha-rtse[826] and Shel-dkar remained the homes of their own local schools with slightly differing (basically gTsang-bris) styles and practices. The style of each minor local tradition was determined by the concrete circumstances of that tradition's origins and development, which is to say mainly by the training and—within certain limits—by the particular practices and preferences of the more recent generations of master artists. The late painter Wangdrak (dBang-grags, 1924–1990?) of Shel-dkar in western gTsang for instance maintained that the style he had learned in his homeland from his father was in fact for the most part a branch of the modern sMan-ris of dBus province because two generations previously a local painting master, his grandfather, had gone to Lhasa and there received his training under an influential



Pl. 67. Portrait of the 8th Dalai Lama, 'Jam-dpal-rgya-mtsho (1758-1804). Painting in a high court style of 19th-century Lhasa. Thangka, Central Tibet, 19th c., 90 x 61.5 cm. Collection R.R.E.



Pl. 68. Atiśa, with Episodes from his Life. Thangka, Central Tibet, first half 18th c., 85 x 55 cm. Private collection, Cologne. Based on a xylograph. Inscription on rear identifies patron of xylograph and possibly also author of inscription as Phur-bu-lcogs Ngag-dbang-byams-pa (1682-1762). Inscription on front identifies its place of keeping as Phur-bu-lcogs: jo bo'i rnam thar 'di phur bu <lcogs> su bzhugs//.



༄།། །།བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་དགྲ་བཅོམ་
པ་ཡང་དག་པ་རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཤཱཀྱ་ཐུབ་པ།

Fig. 203. The Buddha Śākyamuni. Drawing by dGe-'dun-chos-'phel. From the latter's collected writings, vol. 2 (Gangs can rig mdzod, vol. 11), p. 189.

teacher.[827] Thus, though he came from far-western gTsang, his style was not a typical gTsang-ris style.[828]

Among the prominent Tibetan painters and sculptors of the 19th and 20th centuries, Shakabpa enumerates the following: Gur, uncle and nephew, active in mDo-smad rNga-pa and 'Gu-log in the time of the 9th Dalai Lama (Lung-rtogs-rgya-mtsho, 1805–1815), and more recently: 'Bras-spungs Klu-'bum dge-bshes [or "Klu-'bum lha-ris-pa," from A-mdo],[829] Khyung-pa from rGyal-rtse lCog-ro [in gTsang], Kha-sar zur-'phyongs dbu-chen Zam-gdong sKal-bzang, sKas-gdung dbu-mdzad, Ye-shes-rgya-mtsho the sacristan (*dkon gnyer*) of 'Phags-lha, dGa'-gling-shar dPal-'byor [rgya-mtsho?], Chab-mdo Phur-bu lha-bzo (mentioned above), Tshe-dpag lha-bzo, and others.[830] A group of artists based in 'Phan-po north of Lhasa was active in dBus province during the early 20th century.[831]

The noted 20th-century A-mdo scholar and traveller dGe-'dun-chos-'phel (ca. 1903–1951) was also an artist of note. Like the above-mentioned "Klu-'bum lha-ris-pa," he belonged to the Klu-'bum regional dormitory at 'Bras-spungs.[832] His teacher Klu-'bum dge-bshes mDo-sbis Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho (1884–1968) was also a gifted painter, who some claimed was the rebirth of the earlier Klu-'bum lha-ris-pa (said to have flourished in the 18th century)—at least until his student dGe-'dun-chos-'phel came along and proved to be the superior artist.[833]

In the 1990s some of the senior outstanding painters still active in the Lhasa area were: A-mdo Byams-pa, rgan bsTan-pa-rab-rgyas, dbu-che bKra-shis-tshe-ring and Rig-'dzin-dpal-'byor, 'Phrin-las-chos-'phel, and sTobs-rgyas-lags. And at Tashilhunpo in gTsang the most important artists included: drung bsKal-bzang-lags of the gCen-lung dormitory, Rong-mtsho bka'-chen A-ston-lags, Gu-ge drung Blo-tshe-lags, and bka'-chen Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs.[834]

These are just a few of the most famous recent painters and centers of pictorial art. I will leave it to others to portray in more detail the still-flourishing branches of the ancient tree of Tibetan painting.[835]

Notes

[706] Some recent studies have been published on the Buddhist styles that developed north of Amdo in Mongolia, though I have not yet actually seen them: Niamosorgym Tsultem, *The Eminent Mongolian Sculptor — G. Zanabazar* (Ulan Bator: State Publishing House, 1982); *Development of the Mongolian National Style of Painting "Mongol Zurag" in Brief* (Ulan Bator: State Publishing House, 1986); and G. Béguin and Dorjin Dashbaldan, *Trésors de Mongolie XVIIe-XIXe siècles* (Paris: R.M.N. [Éditions des Musées Nationaux], 1993).

[707] For a valuable study of 18th-century Manchu court art, see T. Tse Bartholomew (1992). See also The Palace Museum (1992), *Cultural Relics of Tibetan Buddhism Collected in the Qing Palace* (Beijing, The Forbidden City Press).

[708] Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 112. dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), pp. 103–105, also mentions the artists Che-shos lha-bzo Blo-bzang-bshes-gnyen (fl. late 1600s?) and Gung-ru mkha'-'gro Blo-bzang-chos-sgron, both of whom were active in A-mdo in the 17th/18th centuries. The latter was practically the only known sculptress in Tibetan history.

[709] Seng-gshong rDo-rje-gcod-pa (1988), p. 93. According to information kindly provided by Ms. Katia Buffetrille, there exists a published pictorial *The Buddhist Art of Regong* in Tibetan, Chinese and English, compiled by the Tongren county government (published by the China Nationalities Photograph Art Publishing House), as referred to in an article in *China's Tibet*, vol. 6 (1995), no. 4, p. 48.

[710] *Ibid.*, p. 100. The author lists the names of several of the foremost 20th-century artists from that district on pp. 85 and 90: Khan-kyā'i Sha-bo (1906–1959), mKhar Byams-rgyal (1917–1971), gCod-pa (1920–1959), rNam-rgyal-thar (1936–1981), sTag-lha-rgyal (1917–), dBang-rgyal (1896–?), rDo-rje-byams (1922–1959), bSam-grub (1919–), rDo-rje-rin-chen (1925–1990), and Sha-bo Tshe-ring (1921–). The latter painter is pictured in Liu Lizhong (1988), p. 308, his name being sinicized to "Zhawu Cailang." In Chinese publications Seng-ge-gshong is Wutun in Tongren County, Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. See *ibid.*, p. 94f. It is located northwest of Labrang about five hours by motor vehicle along a very poor road. "Wutun" monastery still contains many beautiful murals.
According to Padma-'bum of Reb-kong (Leibnitz, June 1995), Reb-kong was part of the old larger district Rong-po ("Long fu"). The present Tong-ren-rdzong includes now about eight communes (though previously people used to speak of "Reb kong shogs pa bcu gnyis"). Seng-ge-gshongs has two divisions: upper and lower (*ya mgo* and *ma mgo*). The monastery buildings there were saved from destruction during the Cultural Revolution because they were converted into community storage houses for grain, though their religious contents were mostly destroyed. The local people deny they are Chinese, but they speak a Chinese border dialect with many loan words.

[711] On the latter master see Franz-Karl Ehrhard (1990) and Matthieu Ricard transl. (1994).

[712] 'Jam-dbyangs-blo-gsal (1982), p. 14.

[713] *Ibid.*, pp. 14f.

[714] Chogyam Trungpa (1966), p. 35. Tenga Rinpoche, Swayambhunath, March 1995, also asserted that Zur-mang Che-tshang (gSung-rab-rgya-mtsho) was very skilled as a painter.

[715] According to Gega Lama, Bodhnath, March 1995, he also wrote some ritual manuals.

[716] Thrangu Rinpoche, March 1995, Bodhnath.

[717] Chogyam Trungpa (1966), p. 35. See also Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 22 (11b), who mentions paintings at Karma Lha-stengs by the Zur-mang dPa'-dar sprul-sku. Also seen there, p. 21.6 (11a), was a sixteen-painting set of the Karma bka'-brgyud lineage by the otherwise unknown early great artist Dhis-ru Lha-smyon-ma.

[718] A painting by him of Avalokiteśvara Khasarpāṇi preserved at Karma Lha-stengs is mentioned by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 22.5 (11b). He is also said to have composed a treatise on the proportions of maṇḍalas, as is mentioned below.

[719] Karma-rin-chen-dar-rgyas on p. 251 also mentions a written exposition of proportions (*thig yig*) by gSung-rab-rgya-mtsho. Moreover, 'Be-lo Tshe-dbang-kun-khyab in his inventory of Si-tu Paṇ-chen's memorial stūpa, *Byams mgon*, p. 713 (15a), records the presence of paintings of Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi by the master gSung-rab-rgya-mtsho: *rje gsung rab rgya mtsho'i phyag ris 'jam dbyangs/ spyan ras gzigs/ phyag rdor gyi sku thang gsum/*. As referred to above, Si-tu Paṇ-chen and 'Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 501.5 (*na* 252b) mention the passing away of a master with this name, an older contemporary of Si-tu Paṇ-chen, in 1729.

[720] Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs (1985), pp. 86–7.

[721] Thrangu Rinpoche, Bodhnath, March 1995, stated that the originals of this set were drawn or painted on unframed primed cotton (*ras gzhi*) and are preserved at Rumtek.

[722] The opening lines of the untitled and unsigned work read: *na mo gu ru badzra dha rā ya/ rigs dang dkyil 'khor rgya mtsho'i mnga' bdag mtshan brjod par dka' ba don gyi slad du mtshan nas smos na 'phags mchog 'jig rten dbang*

phyug dpal karma pa theg pa mchog gi rdo rje'i zhal snga nas bstsal ba'i rgyud sde rgya mtsho'i dkyil 'khor gyi thig rtsar....

[723] The maṇḍala or ritual traditions mentioned include the Mar-pa'i lugs rNgog dkyil (p. 9); rNying-ma (p. 22); Gong-dkar-lugs (p. 25); 'Bri-gung-lugs (p. 26); sMin-gling-lugs (p. 29); 'Og-min Karma [old thangkas] (p. 31); Kar-lugs (p. 32, etc.); Kam-tshang rang-lugs (=Kaṃ-tshang rang-lugs) (p. 40); dPal-spungs (p. 56); sTag-lung Yar-thang (p. 58); Mar-thang (p. 58); Gong-dkar (p. 58); sMin-gling (pp. 58, 61); mTshur-phu'i spar-ma (p. 62); and the Sa-lugs, i.e. the Sa-skya-pa tradition (p. 71).

[724] Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs, p. 87.

[725] *Ibid.*, pp. 87f.

[726] *Ibid.*, pp. 88f. See also dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), pp. 125–27, who sketches the life of Thang-bla-tshe-dbang. According to the latter authority, p. 126, he was born in 1902 at dPe-war-chu-nyin near Derge, by the banks of the 'Bri-chu. In addition to his practical studies, he learned the theory of *bzo rig* (proportions, etc.) from mkhan-po mKhyen-rab (dBon-stod-pa 'Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-rab, 1889–1960s, who was second mkhan-po of the rDzong-gsar seminary, tenure ca. 1920–1929).

[727] Gega Lama, Bodhnath, March 1995, recalled that when he first went to study under his teacher Thang-bla-tshe-dbang, the latter was at work writing Kong-sprul's biography. He was not only a great artist but also very learned in the literary arts and as a scribe. He worked on important occasions as scribe for the Si-tu sprul-sku, such as when it was necessary to write official letters with ornamental poetical contents. Gega Lama was amazed to see his teacher keeping up a steady banter of jokes and other light-hearted remarks with his colleagues while he was at work composing the biography. But he never made mistakes while writing--he seemed to be able to do two things at a time.

[728] dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 126.

[729] *Ibid.* On p. 131 he mentions some other Western-style realistic paintings in the rTag-brtan-mi-'gyur pho-brang of the Nor-bu-gling-kha that the 13th Dalai Lama commissioned.

[730] dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 112, mentions as his source for the history of the sGar-bris the work *Bod kyi ri mo 'byung tshul cung zad gleng ba* by Thang-bla-tshe-dbang, a work that is otherwise unaccessible.

[731] According to Gega Lama, Bodhnath, March 1995: Some of Thang-lha-tshe-dbang's drawings were carved onto blocks at dPal-spungs, such as of the Shangs-pa bKa'-brgyud *rTsa ba gsum* (i.e. 1. *bla ma*, 2. *yi dam*, and 3. *chos skyong*). At dPal-spungs the printing blocks for deities, etc., were kept at the Upper Retreat (Ri-khrod gong), i.e. at rTsa'i-'dra Rin-chen-brag, where many blocks for printing Kong-sprul's written works were also kept.

[732] Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs, pp. 88f.

[733] dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 126.

[734] Gega Lama, Bodhnath, March 1995.

[735] Gega Lama (1983), vol. 1, p. 36.

[736] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 47, n. 86.

[737] Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 22.6 (11b): *khams pa kun dga' bstan 'dzin phyag bris gu ru mtshan brgyad chos kyi nyi ma'i sgrub rten zhib cha can sman rnying tshugs ldan/.*

[738] For a description of its sacred contents as seen in 1918, see Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, pp. 4ff. (2b-).

[739] According to Gega Lama, (interview Bodhnath, March 1995), however, the famous Chab-mdo lha-bzo Phur-bu-tshe-ring was from the Kar-shod-pa tradition.

[740] dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 123.

[741] Rang-dge bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du of Khams-pa-sgar, interviewed by Veronika Ronge, India, Sept. 1971.

[742] dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 122.

[743] *Ibid.*, p. 123.

[744] Padma-rnam-grol-mtha'-yas, pp. 274f.

[745] dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 123.

[746] Rang-dge bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du of Khams-pa-sgar, interviewed by Veronika Ronge, India, Sept. 1971.

[747] These are said to have been published from the Khams-sprul's settlement in India, Tashijong. One print of the Buddha's birth, said by Gega Lama to be from Derge blocks, is found in *Bod kyi nang bstan gyi sgyu rtsal* (mTsho-sngon, 1987; 2nd printing 1994), p. 20.

[748] Reprinted in B. C. Olschak and Thubten Wangyal (1973), pp. 25–32.

[749] According to Ku-se dKon-mchog, interview by V. Ronge, Tashijong, Sept. 1971.

[750] Rang-dge bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du of Khams-pa-sgar, interviewed by Veronika Ronge, India, Sept. 1971.

[751] N. Ronge, Leibnitz, June 1995. Such possibilities seem not to have occurred to dKon-mchog-bstan-'dzin (1994), p. 122, who stressed that Gru-pa Phur-bu-tshe-ring's lineage was a continuation of the New sMan-ris of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho alone.

[752] His brother dGe-'phel (ca. 1898–1993) was another important master of the Khams-pa-sgar tradition. For some information on dbu-mdzad bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du and his tradition, I am also indebted to Mr. Namgyal Gonpo Ronge of Bonn, interview, 9 Jan. 1995, and to Veronika Ronge for sharing her notes from interviews in the 1970s.

[753] According to his son N. Ronge, his second painting teacher was Ro-dpal-dbang-'dus.

[754] Rang-dge bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du of Khams-pa-sgar, interviewed by Veronika Ronge, India, Sept. 1971. For further information on this family, I am also indebted to Mr. Namgyal Gonpo Ronge of Bonn, interview January 1995.

[755] Among bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du's sons, several painted. His main disciple was his oldest son, dNgos-grub-yongs-'du (b. ca. 1945?). He is one of the foremost Khams-pa painters, but works in a predominately sGar-

bris style. He did not continue the special rDza-rgyud painting tradition. bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du's second son was rNam-rgyal-mgon-po (b. ca. 1948?), who learned art from his father relatively late (from age 25 onwards). He works in his own more Indian-influenced stylistic synthesis. The youngest (5th) son was Rig-'dzin-dbang-phyug (b. ca. 1953?). Like his oldest brother, he paints more in a sGar-bris style.

756 Padma-rnam-grol-mtha'-yas, pp. 274f.

757 *Ibid.*, p. 275.

758 bsTan-'dzin-padma-rgyal-mtshan, *Nges don*, p. 401.

759 The *'Bri gung lugs* or *'Bri bris*, a painting style cultivated at the monastery of 'Bri-gung and also at certain other monasteries of the 'Bri-gung bka'-brgyud sect, is mentioned by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 62.5 (31a), who saw at Yang-ri-sgar (the summer residence of the 'Bri-gung-pa high lamas) in the temple dedicated to the bKa'-brgyud lineage masters (*bka' brgyud gser 'phreng lha khang*) fifteen thangka boxes (*thang sgam*) that contained paintings by early artists of the 'Bri-gung art tradition "whose color and shading would be difficult to duplicate": *bka' brgyud gser 'phreng lha khang du thang sgam bco lnga nang 'bri gung lugs sngon gyi lha bzo phul gyur tshon mdangs da* [=*de*] *'dra 'ong dka' ba'i gras/*. On p. 70.6 (35b), Kaḥ-thog Si-tu further mentioned seeing at the Sra-brtan-rdo-rje pho-brang, the 'Bri-gung-pa rTse estate, a wonderful thangka painting or paintings of the *dPag bsam 'khri shing* cycle in an "old 'Bri-gung painting style" (*'bri bris rnying pa*).

760 'Bri-gung skyabs-mgon Che-tshang Rin-po-che, Hamburg, 1994. See also M. Rhie and R. Thurman (1991), pp. 60 and 250.

761 The full saying, as repeated by 'Bri-gung skyabs-mgon Che-tshang Rin-po-che (interview Hamburg, 7 December 1994) was: *khams* [=*gtsang*] *bris mun pa rub pa 'dra// 'bri bris nam mkha' langs pa 'dra// g.ye ris nyi ma shar ba 'dra//*. Here the colors of (the landscapes of) the non-dBus school (gTsang should probably be mentioned instead of Khams) are described as having been comparatively dark and muted, as after darkness has fallen, while those of the two dBus-district traditions were lighter. Those of the 'Bri-bris were, however relatively thin and faint, like the colors at dawn, while those of the g.Ye-ris (or E-bris) were brighter and more intense, as after sunrise. In this connection, it is interesting to compare the saying of Wangchuk (dBang-phyug) of Ladakh (interview Leh, 31 July 1977), who similarly characterized the main (sMan-ris) painting tradition of the whole of dBus province in central Tibet, in contrast with his own gTsang style: "The color of dBus is like dawn; the color of gTsang is like dusk" (*dbus gi tshon ni skya mda' 'dra// gtsang gi tshon ni sa rub 'dra//*). Wangchuk had studied (in ca. the late 1960s or early 70s?) under Pasang, an old master of the Tashilhunpo tradition.

762 Ayang Rinpoche, London, December, 1984, as conveyed to me by Mr. Ngawang Tsering of Nurla, Ladakh.

763 'Bri-gung skyabs-mgon Che-tshang Rin-po-che, Hamburg, 1994. Other noteworthy painters who flourished at 'Bri-gung in the mid 20th century were the lha-bris Zla-ba, Chos-bzang and Chos-rje.

764 'Bri-gung skyabs-mgon Che-tshang Rin-po-che, Hamburg, 1994.

765 See for instance Ngawang Samten (1986), pp. 16 and 18.

766 Cf. M. Rhie and R. Thurman (1991), pp. 60 and 247. Stylistically the later sTag-lung paintings seem to resemble one later 'Bri-gung tradition of painting.

767 See A. Chayet (1994), p. 176, n. 682. Per Kvaerne in a personal conversation, Warsaw, June 1994, told me that stylistically the Bon-po painting he has recently been investigating seemed to fall into three regional groupings: Eastern (Khams and A-mdo), Central (dBus and gTsang), and Western (mNga'-ris). For other Bon-po paintings, see P. Pal (1984), pp. 103–106, and plates 52–54; and for references on Bon-po iconographic studies, see also Per Kvaerne (1990), p. 125, n. 1. A rare Bon-po style is also mentioned by H. Karmay (1975), p. 32, n. 55.

768 Klong-rdol bla-ma, p. 415.4. See also E. G. Smith (1970), p. 47, n. 83. According to Smith, "Some of the sources compare it to Bhutanese and Mon-pa painting and design." I have no idea which sources are referred to here.

769 *Ri mo mkhan*, p. 145.

770 On E and its lords, see also J. Karsten (1980), pp. 163ff.

771 Si-tu and Be-lo, vol. 2, p. 627.7, records the presence of E-pa lha-bzo artists in Khams in ca. 1772.

772 Tshe-ring-dbang-rgyal, *Mi dbang rtogs brjod* (Chengdu, 1981), p. 766.

773 Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 107. For other references to E-ris/ E-bris, see Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 63.2 (32a), as mentioned above. The passage refers to a set of twenty thangkas depicting the previous rebirths of the 'Bri-gung sKyobs-pa: *'bri gung skyobs pa rin po che'i skyes rabs e bris nyi shu/*. Kaḥ-thog Si-tu wrote this in ca. 1920, when the E-bris was already well established.

774 Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 107; and Ye-shes-shes-rab (1990), p. 18. Or could the *gzhung ris* simply have been a term for the style patronized by the Dalai Lamas and the dGa'-ldan Pho-brang inner circles in the late 17th and 18th centuries, i.e. the Lhasa court style of this period?

775 Or perhaps it somehow echoes the survival of the mKhyen-ris within the 'Bri-gung tradition. As mentioned above, a saying repeated by 'Bri-gung skyabs-mgon Che-tshang Rin-po-che (interview Hamburg, 7 December 1994) was to the effect that the colors of the two [probably main] dBus-district traditions, namely those of 'Bri-gung and g.Ye, were lighter than the gTsang-bris. The colors of

the g.Ye-ris (or E-bris) (landscapes) were said to be the most intense and brightest of all, likened to the colors of daylight: *g.ye ris nyi ma shar ba 'dra//.*

[776] See Shakabpa (1976), vol. 1, p. 111.3.

[777] *Ri mo mkhan,* p. 145. Could the correct form be "mDzes-pa-skyed"? Or is this a case of a female name having been given to a male for some special purpose? In dBus and gTsang, females were not normally allowed to work as painters. (This was not, however, the case in Khams.)

[778] Geshe Ngawang L. Nornang, personal communication, Seattle, 1980.

[779] It is interesting to note that painters from the monastery of sPyan-g.yas in nearby Phyong-rgyas (the valley adjoining E to the west) had been sent to the principal lama of the (dGe-lugs-pa) Khalkha Mongols already in the 17th century. See A. Chayet (1994), p. 168, n. 658.

[780] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 48. See also M. Aris (1986), p. 184, note 18, who states that the zhabs-drung's artistic skills were well attested, referring for instance to an image of Hevajra he made for the Sa-skya hierarch bSod-nams-dbang-po as mentioned in the *Lho chos 'byung* I (f. 19a).

[781] Padma-rnam-grol-mtha'-yas, p. 8.

[782] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 48. See also Padma-rnam-grol-mtha'-yas, p. 8.

[783] E. G. Smith (1970), p. 48, n. 87.

[784] *Ibid.*, p. 48, n. 86.

[785] Shākya-rin-chen, *Sangs rgyas byang sems kyi sku gzugs kyi cha tshad tsam bkod pa rmongs pa'i mig 'byed,* pp. 281 and 301.

[786] 'Brug bsTan-'dzin is said by Padma-rnam-grol-mtha'-yas, p. 8, to have been a disciple of, or a follower in the tradition of, Mi-pham-chos-'phel.

[787] *Ri mo mkhan,* p. 145f.: *lho 'dir zhabs drung thog mar byon pa'i dus// 'jam dbyangs dpal ldan rgya mtsho'i phyag bzhes dang// sprul sku 'brug bstan 'dzin kyi slob ma la// gdung mkhar slob dpon 'brug bsam 'grub dang ni// kha ling slob dpon bstan 'dzin rnam pa gnyis// de rjes a 'grod nor bu don 'grub rnams// lho 'dir ri mo legs pa'i phyag rgyun te// 'brug zhung du ri byang chub sems dpa' zhes// sngon dus rnam 'gyur mkhas par 'jog pa lags//.* See also below, Appendix J. I am indebted for this reference to Mr. Tashi Tsering.

[788] Padma-rnam-grol-mtha'-yas, p. 8. According to Matthieu Ricard, Bodhnath, March 1995, one of the outstanding painters nowadays in Bhutan is the artist U-rgyan-lhun-grub (b. ca. 1940?). He works very prolifically, and used to be patronized by bDud-'joms Rin-po-che. He seems to work in a "sMan-rnying" (actually probably sMan-gsar) style. Another outstanding artist from there is dBang-'dus, who painted the murals of Nam-mkha'-snying-po's monastery in 'Bum-thang. These include detailed frescoes illustrating the *Padma'i bka' thang.*

[789] It was discovered and brought to my attention by Franz-Karl Ehrhard.

[790] This was an old 'Ba-ra-ba bKa'-brgyud center northeast of Kyirong. For this and other geographical details relating to the life story of Kun-bzang-phrin-las-dbang-phyug, I am indebted to F.-K. Ehrhard.

[791] Kaḥ-thog rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu's work *Bris yig legs bshad gser thur* survives and was reprinted twenty years ago as the fourth work in the volume *Grub thob brgya bcu rtsa bźi'i chos skor* (New Delhi: Chophel Legdan, 1973), pp. 395–418. He wrote the work in 1735 (shing yos) north of Sikkim at the 'Bri-'tshams gSang-sngags-ri-bo retreat. The full title of the work is: *Grub thob chen po brgyad bcu rtsa bzhi'i 'bri yig shin tu dag cing gsal ba legs bshad gser thur.* At the end of the work (pp. 414f.; 10b-) Tshe-dbang-nor-bu writes: *de ltar grub thob chen po brgyad bcu rtsa bzhi'i bris yig so so'i rnam thar dang 'thun par sbyar ba/ rje btsun chen po grol ba'i mgon po'i bzhed pa ji lta ba las rang rtogs gi* [=rtog gis] *cung zad kyang ma slad par bkod pa'o//.* This represents the tradition of slob-dpon dPa'-bo-'od-dpal. I am grateful to F.-K. Ehrhard for this reference. It is clear that Brag-dkar-rta-so sprul-sku Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug had a direct knowledge of the work.

[792] Brag-dkar-rta-so sprul-sku Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug, *mKhas mchog bla ma,* f. 24a-b: *bod spyir gtang du rdo rje gdan pas mdzad par grags pa'i grub brgya'i bstod pa de'i rje su 'brang ba'i bris tshul kyang rang rang gi bzhed lugs mang zhig yod par snang zhing bri bkod kyang sna tshogs shig mthong mod/ 'dir ni jo nang rje btsun tā ra nā tha'i bzhed pa grub thob rnams kyi sku'i cha byad so so'i rtogs brjod dang mthun pa rtag brtan phun tshogs gling gi theg mchog he ru ka'i lha khang logs ris su bzhugs shing/ de dang mthun pa'i bri yig zhig kyang jo nang gi phyag dar nyal nyil khrod nas* [24b] *rig 'dzin rje'i rnyed de gzigs pa bzhin bri yig legs bshad gser thur zhes pa'i bstan bcos kyang mdzad pa las 'dir bris dpe'i phyi mo dang cung zad re mi mthun pa tsam las gzhan du gung mthun pa'i bris thang 'di nyid bzo rig pa'i tshad lta bur dam pa 'di rang gi phyag ris gtsang ma gzhan gyi 'dres med kho na mig gi dga' ston du snang ba 'di bzhin te/ byams spring gtsug lag khang du grub brgya'i logs bris lan gnyis dang bris thang 'di bcas tshar gsum du mdzad pas rmad du byung ba'i mdzad pa ngo mtshar ba zhig go//.*

[793] *Ibid.*, f. 29b.4: *'go zla'i mjug tu kho bos sku mdun du bcar nas ... mtshan brgyad kyi thang ka gra tshar phyag ris skyangs pa'i sku yon mtshon byed rin 'khor srang bco lnga/ na bza' sku lus cha tshang ba sogs phul/ gtso thang sogs thang ka kha shas la gong gshams grub pa'i gzigs lam du phab par dgyes par mdzad/.*

[794] See Ratna Kumar Rai (1994), pp. 35–49. In tables VI and VII (pp. 83–86), Ratna Kumar Rai lists "frescoes" in these areas by various, mainly recent artists.

[795] This information on rNam-grol-bzang-po's ancestry appears in the latter's biography by his disciple bSod-nams-blo-gros (1516–1581), *mKhas grub chen po rnam grol bzang po'i rnam thar dad pa'i spu long g.yo byed ngo*

mtshar can (Dalhousie/Delhi, Damchoe Sangpo, 1985), ff. 18ff., as I was informed by F.-K. Ehrhard.

796 According to Dol-po bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu (b. 1971), from Tin-kyu in 'Ban-tshang in northeast Dol-po (interviewed Bodhnath, April 1995): bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu's father is Karma-bstan-'dzin (b. 1932), his grandfather was U-rgyan-rnam-rgyal, great-grandfather, Bla-ma rDo-rje, and great-great-grandfather, bSam-gtan-nor-bu. His grandfather, U-rgyan-rnam-rgyal, went to mTshur-phu in the time of the 15th Karma-pa, where he learned the sGar-bris style. Their family is a continuation of the old Dol-po lineage of rNam-grol-bzang-po, being the descendants of the fourth son of that generation. (The lama rNam-grol-bzang-po was the third son.) In a period before rNam-grol-bzang-po there was also a female painter in their lineage called dpon-mo Che-lcam-dpal. In the time of A-ma-dpal of Mustang (first half 15th c.), there is said to have been a competition between their ancestor dpon Thang-nyi of 'Ban-tshang and the master artist dpon Chos-'bar of Glo-bo. The three most recent generations of the family are pictured by E. Valli and D. Summers (1994), *Hufbruch am Ende der Welt* (Hamburg, Geo), pp. 134f. Besides his son, the students of Karma-bstan-'dzin include the painters dBang-rgyal (of Ri-bo-'bum-pa, d. California) and Padma-kun-khyab.

797 Dol-po bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu, Bodhnath, 1995. These artists included skilled scribes (he had seen manuscripts signed by "dpon sPang-lung"). Sketches by earlier artists of sPang-lung are pictured as the frontispiece and on p. 47 of E. Valli and D. Summers (1994).

798 G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 2, p. 216, no. II 451.

799 See for instance D. Snellgrove (1967), p. 58, and ills. 26, 37, 38, etc., who describes or illustrates works of the bDe-chen bla-brang bla-ma, and C. Jest (1974), pp. 40–41, showing dBang-rgyal of Ri-bo-bum-pa at work and one of his paintings.

800 For an interesting account of the art and ways of life of the recent Sherpa artists "Kapa Par Gyaltsen" (mKhas-pa dPal-rgyal-mtshan?) and the late "Au Leshi" (A-khu or A'u Legs-bshad, otherwise known as "dge-chung Ngag-dbang-legs-bshad," b. ca. 1915–1920), see Hugh R. Downs (1980), pp. 100ff. and 116ff.

801 See for instance C. Copeland (1980) and Ngawang Samten (1986). See also D. Klimburg-Salter (1982), pp. 152–167; and for the modern period, E. Lo Bue (1983a).

802 The dGa'-ldan pho-brang and thus the dGe-lugs-pa gained supremacy throughout most of mNga'-ris after the victorious campaigns of rgyal-po dGa'-ldan-tshe-dbang in 1679–1681.

803 D. Klimburg-Salter (1982), p. 167.

804 Mr. Ngawang Tsering of Nurla, oral communication, Hamburg, 1994, based on an unpublished history of Ladakh by bSod-nams-phun-tshogs.

805 Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 5.

806 *Ibid.*

807 For instance, A. Neven (1978), pp. 42–45 (no. 21–23), illustrated a large sophisticated gTsang-ris painting of Kālacakra (137 × 82 cm.). Neven tried to identify the style of paintings according to geographical regions gTsang, dBus and "Eastern." He classified three thangkas of the Paṇ-chen Rinpoches as gTsang-bris (see p. 51, nos. 26–28), though they show all the typical features of the dBus-bris. Also, two fine 18th-century gTsang-bris [sic] paintings are illustrated, with the 3rd and 7th Dalai Lamas as main figures and Avadāna stories in the background. This is a good recent example of the independence of "geographic" style from the themes portrayed.

808 bKras dgon lo rgyus rtsom 'bri tshogs chung (1992), p. 63.

809 Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 6. bKras dgon lo rgyus rtsom 'bri tshogs chung (1992), pp. 64f., likewise mentions in detail the murals of this assembly hall, otherwise known as the "mDzad brgya tshoms chen," built in 1739 by the Tashilhunpo chamberlain Blo-bzang-tshe-dbang. The murals included a depiction of the twelve previous lives of the Paṇ-chen Lamas on the walls of the sky-light opening. See also the mention on p. 69 of a later set of thirteen such rebirth-lineage thangkas offered by the Ch'ing emperor in 1796 and enshrined in the 'Dra-thang lha-khang ("portrait-thangka chapel").
Nineteen plates in the book People's Fine Arts Publishing House, ed. (1982), *Selected Tibetan Jātaka Murals* (pp. 11, 27–30, 32–35, 38f., 49, 51, 55, 102 (cf. p. 35), 111, 118, 120 and 140) portray episodes from the "Hundred Deeds" (*mdzad pa brgya*) cycle of Jātaka and Avadāna stories. Could these be from the so-called mDzad-pa-brgya tshoms-chen (or mChod-dkyil tshoms-chen) of Tashilhunpo that was painted in the 1730s? They seem to be in a refined New sMan-ris, possibly the work of an early follower of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's tradition. One scene from these Tashilhunpo murals (*ibid.*, p. 35, pl. 22) is also shown in Liu Lizhong (1988), *Buddhist Art of the Tibetan Plateau*, p. 200, pl. 371.

810 For an example of a black thangka (*nag thang*) from Zhwa-lu (near Shigatse) by the artist mKhyen-rab-'jam-dbyangs dating probably to the first half of the 1800s, see M. Rhie and R. Thurman (1991), pp. 212–213, no. 67, and Terese Tse Bartholemew (1987).

811 Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 6. The sculptor Che-mo Shi-log of rTse-gdong, interviewed Bodhnath, March 1995, stated that the great new Maitreya at Tashilhunpo was made by the bKra-shis-skyed-tshal association of artisans who were from a village just outside of Shigatse. They supplied most of the artists (especially sculptors) for Tashilhunpo. (Monks could learn painting, but they were not normally allowed to practice other crafts.) These artists were jealous and competitive with the rTse-gdong artists

and did not want any help from the latter, though the first idea had been to use artists from both groups. Che-mo Shi-log and many others believed that the resulting image was: "Too big, and therefore not really such a great success."

[812] Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 6.

[813] Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 7. According to Che-mo Shi-log of rTse-gdong, interviewed Bodhnath, March 1995, the famous painter Shi-log of Tashilhunpo was the artist responsible for painting many Tashilhunpo thangkas of lamas published in color in the mid 1980s from Tibet (with inscriptions below by the Panchen Rinpoche).

[814] Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 7. For more details of the career of Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs himself, see *ibid.*, pp. 7–9.

[815] See also J. Huntington (1985), p. 50.

[816] According to the sculptor Shi-log of rTse-gdong, Bodhnath, 1995, the famous painters from rTse-gdong itself included Che-mo Kun-dga'-don-grub of the sMon-skyid family of rTse-gdong, who used to paint in Sa-skya and was quite famous there. His son Tshe-dbang-dbang-'dus (ca. 1915–1973) was che-mo at Sa-skya. rTse-gdong was actually more famous for its makers of metal, especially gilt copper statues and other sculpted images. In dBus and gTsang provinces there were only three centers of metal sculpture: rTse-gdong, Tashilhunpo and Lhasa. Some skilled metal workers were present in Lha-shub-pa near Ngam-ring in gTsang, but they did not make any sacred sculptures (*lha sku*). Otherwise painters were much more widespread--a few could be found in most localities. The informant, Che-mo Shi-log was born in the bird year (1921) at rTse-gdong, a place located north of the gTsang-po river at the bottom of the Shangs valley. (The spelling should be *rtse* as in Nam-rtse, and not *rtsed.*) It is near the gTsang-'gram Bye-ma lha-khang, one of the ancient demoness-suppressing temples of the 7th-century ruler Srong-btsan-sgam-po. Che-mo Shi-log's father was the great sculptor g.Yu-drung (ca. 1897–1959) of the lCang-rwa family in rTse-gdong, who served as che-mo of both Sa-skya and Lha-sa (he died at Lhasa). The latter's first son was Phun-tshogs-dbang-'dus (1916–1964), who was a member of the 'Dod-dpal association of artisans in Lhasa. Their rTse-gdong tradition had been passed down from father to son for many generations. It is said to have begun many centuries ago when one of their forefathers worked at Sa-skya and elsewhere with some Newar metal-workers who had come to Tibet. In rTse-gdong, the men do all kinds of craft work: metal work, sculpture, painting, sewing, wood carving, carpentry, etc. The womenfolk were responsible for tending the fields.

[817] Chab-mdo was also famed for its makers of copper images. Many famous sculptors also came from sTong-skor, one of the Hor-khog-lnga in Khams.

[818] A-khro or A-gro in sGa-pa was also home to many artisans, especially metal-workers.

[819] More detailed records of projects undertaken in Lhasa in the last three centuries can be found in the writings of the Dalai Lamas who lived to attain majority. The fourth and fifth volumes of the 13th Dalai Lama's collected works, for instance, contain works describing the murals newly painted during various major restoration projects in Central Tibet.

[820] For a brief account of the Lhasa painters' guild, see Thubten Sangay (1984), pp. 33–34. For more on Tibetan craftsmen, see Veronika Ronge (1978).

[821] Wangdrak, Rajpur, 1982. He added that Lhasa artists typically used to space very evenly the five skulls or the five golden *rigs-lnga* ornaments on the heads of deities. Some gTsang-pa artists would, by contrast, place the three central ones closely together, while leaving a wider gap between them and the two outside ones.

[822] Bod rang skyong ljongs rig dngos do dam u yon lhan khang, ed. (1992), p. 44. According to *ibid.,* p. 45, in 1797–8 the 8th Dalai Lama commissioned many gilt images from artisans of the Zhol 'Dod-dpal guild.

[823] Bod rang skyong ljongs rig dngos do dam u yon lhan khang, ed. (1992), p. 113–114.

[824] Wangdrak, Rajpur, 1982, who added: gTsang-pa painters had been using imported colors from India, but in the 1930s some were exposed to the Tibetan stone and earth colors and began using them again.

[825] According to Padma-'jigs-med, Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, 2 March 1995, one of the main painters from here is now the master artist Phun-tshogs-bzang-po (b. ca. 1930?), who presently lives in Darjeeling. The latter did many paintings for bDud-'jom Rin-po-che, sometimes under the latter's close supervision, including a set of the *Guru mtshan brgyad* that was published by Tharthang Trulku as a set of posters. He considered his tradition to be the sMan-gsar [i.e. a continuation of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's tradition]. His paintings are characterized by their fine details such as lively and realistic small figures, and good overall compositions.

[826] According to Lha-rtse sGang-zur Dar-rgyas (b. 1931), interviewed 27 Feb 1995, Bodhnath: The painters of both Lha-rtse and Shel-dkar worked in gTsang-bris traditions, though their style was a bit provincial, having preserved some old-fashioned features. They were similar in particular in their use of colors. (Both tended to use the basic colors pure and unmixed; the artists of Tashilhunpo, by contrast, used to mix in for example a little green in the blues.) Their tradition was basically a sMan-ris offshoot. In their iconometric practice, their tradition went back to the teachings of sMan-bla-don-grub, but it had been simplified to a system of just five basic proportional classes (*thig khang*). In general they used to speak of four iconometric traditions (*thig tshad lugs bzhi*): sMan-thang-lugs, Mi-pham-lugs, dNgul-chu-lugs, and dPal-mo-lugs.

The informant's father was Nyi-ma-nor-bu (1901?–1969?) of the sGang-chen-zur-pa family in Lha-rtse, western gTsang. Dar-rgyas studied under him and the latter's maternal uncle bsTan-'dzin-tshul-khrims (1874?–1956?), who taught him how to prepare paints. Then as a refugee in the 1960s, Dar-rgyas stayed first in Shar Khumbu in the Sherpa region, studying under the two important Sherpa painters mkhas-pa sKal-ldan (d. 1982?, father of mkhas-pa Pa-sang, b. 1932?) and Zho-rong A'u Legs-bshad. Both worked in gTsang-ris styles. His uncle bsTan-'dzin-tshul-khrims was originally a monk and was the son of the great painter Nor-bu-bkra-shis. The latter was highly praised by one of the Paṇ-chen Rin-po-ches of the 19th century, who said, "His paintings do not require ritual vivification (*rab gnas*)!" This lineage was originally called "'Dar-pa," being from 'Dar in western gTsang. The sGang-chen-zur-pa family was in more recent times dependents (*mi ser*) of both Sa-skya and Tashilhunpo. There was no annual tax on artists, though if summoned for a major restoration, they were obliged to go. Such work was not terribly well paid. There were about fifteen or sixteen painters under Lha-rtse rdzong, and they used to come together in the summer for projects sponsored by the *rdzong*.

827 Wangdrak was the main informant for the book D. Jackson (1984).

828 Wangdrak's grandfather had been the fellow student of a certain lama later known as mTsho-mgo mkhan-chen when they both had learned painting in dBus. Wangdrak's father Shel-dkar sTobs-rgyal was one of the junior painting masters and overseers (*dbu chung*) at the renovation of the rGyang 'Bum-mo-che in ca. 1930/31. A few years later at the restoration of the gCung Ri-bo-che in ca. 1936 (following damage from the great earthquake) he served alternately as *dbu chen* and *dbu chung*. During the restoration of the Sa-skya Lha-khang chen-mo, he served as *tshon gnyer*, the man in charge of preparing paints and other necessary supplies. Shekar Wangdrak's brother is the artist Ngawang Norbu, formerly the painter who drew illustrations for Tibetan newspapers in Darjeeling.

829 He was evidently both an artist and scholastic. He is not to be confused with the later well-known "Klu-'bum dge-bshes," i.e. rDo-sbis dge-bshes Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho (1884–1968), a teacher of dGe'-dun-chos-'phel who, as will be mentioned below, was also highly skilled as a painter. See also H. Karmay (1980), p. 146.

830 Shakabpa (1976), p. 112.

831 Chobgye Rinpoche, Bodhnath, April 1995, describes the lineage of the local 'Phan-po Na-lendra painters as follows: His painter Legs-grub-rgya-mtsho's father was bSod-nams-chos-'dzin (ca. 1910–1957?), a very skilled artist from the mThong-smon estate of the bCo-brgyad bla-brang. He was taken care of as a boy by the previous bCo-brgyad khri-pa. (His uncle, meanwhile, was an official of Kun-bde-gling.) He first learned painting at that time from the bCo-brgyad Zhabs-drung dBon Rin-po-che mKhyen-rab-'jigs-med-rgya-mtsho (1897–1957). When a young man he worked with the approximately twenty artists of the mThong-smon estate, for instance when they went to sMin-grol-gling monastery to paint the murals illustrating the episodes of the *Padma bka' thang*. The bCo-brgyad Zhabs-drung dBon Rin-po-che had learned painting from the outstanding 'Phan-po Na-lendra artist 'Jam-dpal. The latter was a student of the 'Phan-po artist Khong-po-che and his famous disciple Lha-lung nang-so. It is said that in addition to these 'Phan-po traditions, 'Jam-dpal also learned the sMan-ris style of Lhasa. Another famous artist from 'Phan-yul was Glang-thang-pa rDo-rje, from Glang-thang near Na-lendra. 'Phan-po Ngag-dbang-rdo-rje, now in Manali, works in an extremly fine style that he learned at Kun-bde-gling.

832 See H. Karmay (1980) and H. Stoddard (1985).

833 See H. Karmay (1980), p. 146. On the latter Klu-'bum dge-bshes, see H. Stoddard (1988).

834 Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, p. 10.

835 It would be good to see a more exhaustive survey of outstanding living Tibetan painters and their work along the lines of the research begun by Erberto F. Lo Bue (1978), (1981) and (1983a). For the *history* of Tibetan painting, too, such studies have a lot to offer since the living tradition as it was carried on by the older masters, being as a rule fairly conservative, is one of the surest guides to the styles of the most recent generations. One could begin by simply identifying senior painters from important lineages and ascertaining their artistic "pedigrees" as accurately and as far back as possible. Then one could attempt to clarify major differences between the leading contemporary styles and also to link these styles with already published paintings of the 18th and 19th centuries. It is curious that this obvious approach has never been attempted in a systematic way.

Chapter 14

Concluding Remarks

The foregoing sketch is based only on the passages and sources I was lucky enough to track down so far, and it is by no means exhaustive. Without a doubt, numerous other important references to great painters are still to be found even in the standard works cited many times above.[836] Likewise, many other helpful inscriptions containing names of artists and patrons surely remain to be traced on thangkas—even on some of the scroll paintings already accessible in Western collections. If such materials are ever recorded and explored systematically, it may be possible one day not only to identify and date more examples of the main styles and the most famous artists, but also to clarify the history of some of the more obscure artists and traditions.

Most of the accessible Tibetan written accounts on the great painters and their styles unfortunately do not describe painting traditions in enough detail to serve as the basis for stylistic analyses of available paintings. Sometimes the descriptions are even contradictory. The main starting points for more detailed and historically sounder studies of the traditional painting schools can therefore only be either thangkas with inscriptions that allow a clear attribution, or else dateable and attributable murals.[837] To link actual works of art with the historical sources, one of the key steps will thus be to record and study each and every bit of significant writing occurring beneath murals and on both the front and back of thangkas.

For Tibetan art history to attain the maturity that is taken for granted in the art history of many other countries, it must furthermore be thoroughly grounded in the literate background culture of Tibetan Buddhism, especially in the histories and other relevant works. This of course is not meant to deny the importance of a good eye for style and stylistic development in their own right. A certain amount of "ethnographic" sophistication can also only help. For example, a better understanding of how the artists and lama-patrons lived and worked and of their concrete intentions when producing religious art works can provide valuable insight into the variables that influenced style. For in fact the particular wishes and intentions of the patron could and sometimes *did* strongly influence the expression of style. It could happen, for instance, that an influential patron would intentionally commission a work in one specific style or another, even in an already archaic one, having his artists copy from an old example (such as the 5th Dalai Lama did with a painting of sprul-sku Byi'u, as mentioned above). The taking of such early, highly venerated originals as examples for copying was much more frequent than one usually supposes, and numerous instances of this have already been mentioned above.[838]

Written Descriptions of Paintings

Learned lamas, moreover, sometimes wrote careful descriptions of early masterpieces, which could then become the basis for paintings commissioned by the lamas themselves or by pious Tibetans of later generations. One finds several such

painting-descriptions or painting-plans (*bris yig*) for instance in the collected works of Glo-bo mkhan-chen (1456–1532).[839] Another such text awaiting more detailed study is the careful description of paintings of the eighty-four mahāsiddhas in the tradition of Jo-nang Tāranātha by the 18th-century master Kaḥ-thog rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu, a work that has already been briefly mentioned twice above. This work was based, in turn, on a written plan composed by Tāranātha himself.[840]

As an interesting more recent instance of old paintings influencing the new by way of written descriptions, one could mention the murals executed during the rebuilding and decorating of the main temple hall at Thag-lung (or Thar-lam) monastery in sGa-khog district of Khams in the early 1920s under the sponsorship of sGa-ston Ngag-dbang-legs-pa (1864–1941).[841] Here an older set of thangkas showing complicated lineages was taken as an example for the new mural paintings. The murals high on the walls beneath the skylight opening (*rgya mthongs*) included depictions of nine great masters of the tradition, beginning with the five Sa-skya founders, and including images of Ngor-chen Kun-dga'-bzang-po (1382–1456), sGa rab-'byams-pa Kun-dga'-ye-shes (fl. mid-to-late 1400s), Tshar-chen Blo-gsal-rgya-mtsho (1502–1566) and the more recent 'Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po (1820–1892), whom sGa-ston considered his main teacher. Around each main figure were painted smaller figures of lineages such as the *Path with the Fruit* (*Lam 'bras*) masters and the abbots of Ngor, all the way down to the then-current Ngor abbot, Khang-gsar Dam-pa Rin-po-che Ngag-dbang-blo-gros-gzhan-phan-snying-po (1876–1953).

For the exact depictions of the various masters, the artists relied upon notes taken down at sGa-ston Ngag-dbang-legs-pa's request by the learned monk sDe-gzhung Chos-'phel (b. 1880s, d. mid 1950s) on the basis of a wonderful set of three old lineage thangkas then in Derge in the possession of rDzong-gsar mKhyen-brtse Chos-kyi-blo-gros (1893–1959). The set of paintings had originally been sent by the 18th-century Sa-skya 'Khon hierarch Ngag-dbang-kun-dga'-blo-gros (1729–1783 or ca. 1790) to the king of Derge when the master was obliged to decline an invitation to Derge.[842] For such complicated subjects with many figures, it was essential to follow models or at least detailed written descriptions.

Such written descriptions of paintings, even brief ones occurring as asides in a historical or biographical narrative, can give valuable information about early works of art and early developments in painting types—even about periods for which very few pictorial witnesses otherwise survive. As an interesting example of this, one could mention the description of an early painting found in a history of the bKa'-gdams-pa Lam-rim teachers. The painting was commissioned in the 11th century by Nag-tsho lo-tsā-ba Tshul-khrims-rgyal-ba (b. 1011), a disciple and translator of the influential Indian paṇḍita Atiśa Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna (ca. 982–ca. 1054). The story relates that Nag-tsho lo-tsā-ba, after parting from Atiśa in sNye-thang and journeying to mNga'-ris in the west, commissioned a skilled Indian painter named Kṛṣṇa to paint a large thangka portraying his teacher Atiśa as the central figure. The cotton support measured sixteen cubits in length. At the top of the painting, he had Atiśa's tutelary deities portrayed and beneath them Atiśa's twelve main gurus. To the life-sized central image of Atiśa were added depictions of attendants to both the right and left. Along the outer right and left edges of the painting were portrayed the main events of the master's life. Pictured to one side in the foreground below were Atiśa's main Tibetan disciples, including Khu-ston, 'Brom-ston rGyal-ba'i-'byung-gnas (1005–1064) and rNgog Legs-pa'i-shes-rab, all shown as if studying in a seminary. Finally, in front of all the rest, Nag-tsho lo-tsā-ba had himself painted in a pose of reverent supplication. On the back of the thangka he had written out a eulogy of Atiśa in eighty verses. This painting was later treasured as one of the most holy images in all three districts of mNga'-ris.[843] The earlier sources on the bKa'-gdams tradition (from which the above account probably also derived) contain further references to such early paintings of Atiśa, his disciples and activities.[844]





Figs. 204 and 205. Atiśa and 'Brom-ston. Xylograph, 20th c. From a Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra xylographed in Lhasa by the Ding-ri-ba Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1897-1956?), pp. 165 and 167 (a 82a and 83a).

Written plans (*bris yig*) can also function as instructions to guide the artists in executing new paintings. A number of examples of such descriptions can be found in the collected works of lamas.[845]

Paintings Commissioned as Models

Particularly sacred or famous works of religious art were, quite naturally, often taken as examples for further copying. Sometimes, too, drawings or paintings were commissioned by a religious master with the specific intention that they were to function as originals from which further copies were to be made. Many originals planned and commissioned by Si-tu Paṇ-chen in the 18th century functioned in this way, and several of them did spread throughout Tibet. Another much earlier example of such purposeful propagation of art examples is mentioned in the biography of gTsang-smyon He-ru-ka (1452–1507), where there is described gTsang-smyon's decision to spread certain illustrations of Mi-la ras-pa's life story to elsewhere in western Tibet, including Glo-bo and Gung-thang, because (according to his biographer rGod-tshang-pa) previously such pictures illustrating the saint's biography had neither been known nor become widely established in Tibet.[846] gTsang-smyon personally kept one such biographical thangka in his own possession and propagated copies of it in La-stod Lho. And after receiving the promised support of the Rin-spungs-pa ruler Don-yod-rdo-rje (1463–1512), he also intended to spread this tradition further



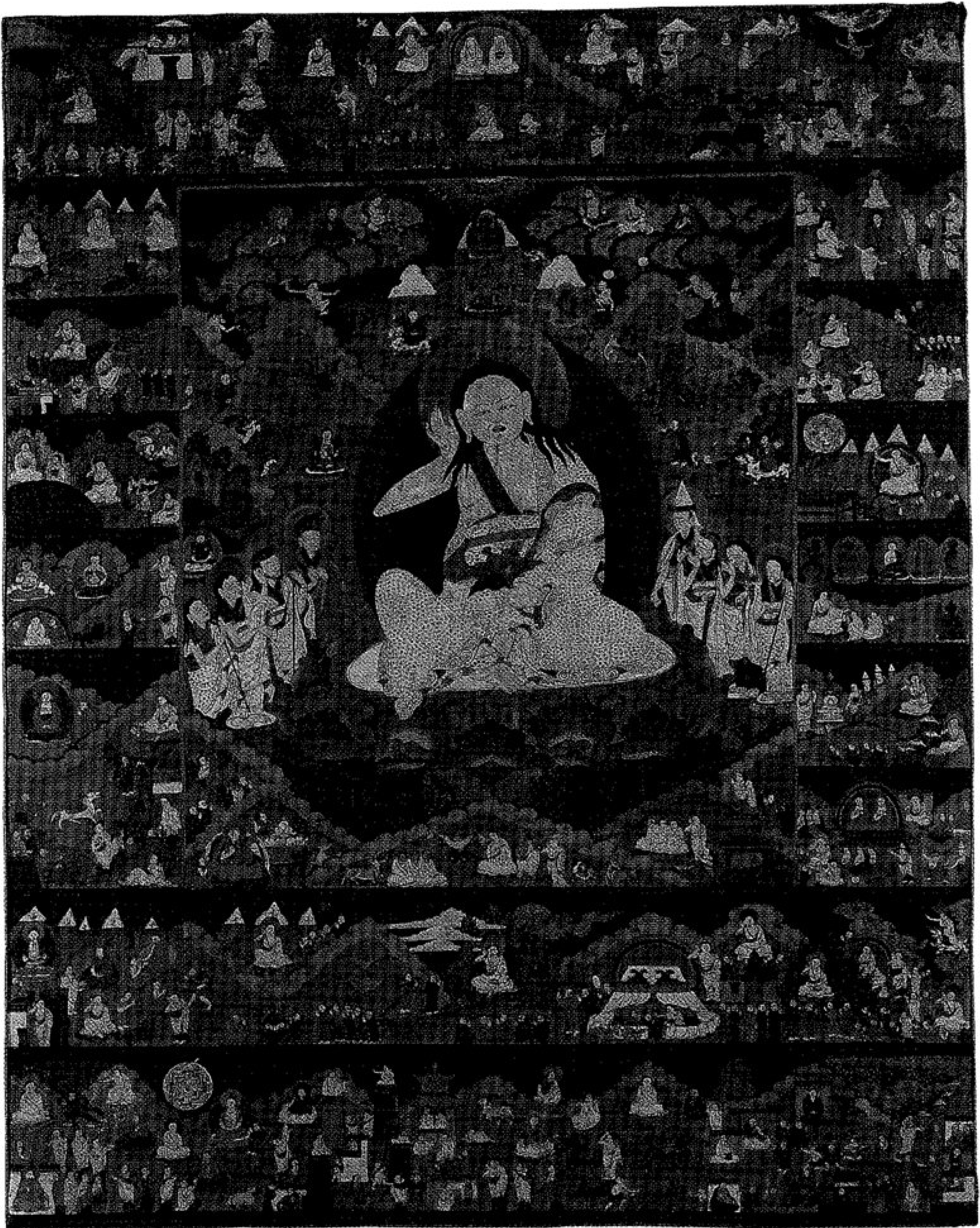
Fig. 206. rGod-tshang Ras-pa sNa-tshogs-rang-grol. Xylograph, early-16th-century, Gung-thang. From the early Gung-thang edition of gTsang-smyon's biography by rGod-tshang Ras-pa sNa-tshogs-rang-grol (reprint: Śatapiṭaka Series, vol. 69, New Delhi, 1969).



Fig. 207. Tilopa, Nāropa and Mar-pa. Xylograph, early-16th-century, Gung-thang. Illustrations from the early Gung-thang edition of gTsang-smyon's biography by rGod-tshang ras-pa sNa-tshogs-rang-grol (reprint: Śatapiṭaka Series, vol. 69, New Delhi, 1969).



Fig. 208. rDo-rje-grags-pa, Mi-la and Dam-rdzong-pa. Xylograph, early-16th-century, Gung-thang. Illustrations from the early Gung-thang edition of gTsang-smyon's biography by rGod-tshang ras-pa sNa-tshogs-rang-grol (reprint: Śatapiṭaka Series, vol. 69, New Delhi, 1969).



Pl. 69. Mi-la ras-pa, with episodes from his life. Based on a 16th-century original. Thangka, 16th/17th c.?, 86 x 69 cm. Musée Guimet, no. MG 21 234. Photograph R. M. N. Published: G. Béguin (1991), p. 69, no. 24, and also P. Dollfus (1991).

east in dBus and gTsang provinces of central Tibet. So for this he instructed one of his senior disciples, bSod-nams-grub-pa, to oversee the making of a further such painting and to publish the pictures from printing blocks in dBus, gTsang, rTsa-ri, etc.[847]

A second early set of paintings depicting Mi-la's life was made somewhat later, in the first half of the 1500s, under the sponsorship of Lha-btsun Rin-chen-rnam-rgyal (1473–1557), who was another important disciple of gTsang-smyon and the author of a second biography of the latter (found in the *Ras chung snyan brgyud*). Rin-chen-rnam-rgyal's activities in this line are mentioned in his own biography,[848] and they even resulted in some paintings that survive down to the present, having been collected in Khams before 1910 by the pioneering French Tibetologist Jacques Bacot.[849] (See Pl. 69.)



Pl. 70. The Copper-Colored Mountain (Zangs-mdog-dpal-gyi-ri) paradise of Padmasambhava. Thangka, Kyirong district, early 19th c., 58 x 39 cm. Essen collection. Published: G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1989), vol. 1, p. 202; = no. II 367 (I 123). Inscription written by Brag-dkar-rta-so sprul-sku Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug (1775-1837).

Similarly, it could happen that an influential master in a certain locale would consciously design and commission the painting of a thangka with the intention that it be used as an authoritative example for later such paintings within his own area. For instance, it is recorded that the Brag-dkar-rta-so sprul-sku Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug (1775–1837) commissioned in sKyid-rong in the early 1820s the painting of a set of the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava (*gu ru mtshan brgyad*). This set was copied from an original that had been designed by the patron's older brother "Siddhi" (the painter Kun-bzang-phrin-las-dbang-phyug, 1772–1812) shortly before his death. It was said that the original set designed by the latter had been intended as a trustworthy example to be used by those wanting to have such a set of thangkas painted in Mang-yul.[850]

The Role of Xylograph Printing

If the line drawings of such authoritative examples were also printed from xylograph blocks, as often did happen, then standardization on the levels of composition and line was fostered again and again with every impression.[851] For single paintings or relatively limited themes, such printing had begun at least by the late 15th century (as was mentioned just above, with the propagating of depictions of Mi-la ras-pa's life by gTsang-smyon's disciple bSod-nams-grub-pa). Some prints reportedly originated from blocks at Jonang in gTsang—i.e. probably dating to before about 1642 when the blocks were sealed.[852] And by the 18th century more complicated sets of block-printed pictures began to emanate from such printeries as sNar-thang and sDe-dge, and these were disseminated far and wide along the main routes of trade and pilgrimage. It was not that uncommon for such designs to be printed directly upon the prepared cotton ground (*ras gzhi*) of a thangka, where the designs fulfilled the same function as an inked sketch.[853]

To mention just one further more recent example of the influence of such block-prints, the compositions of some of the other murals painted in the early 1920s during the above-mentioned rebuilding of Thar-lam monastery under the sponsorship of sGa-ston Ngag-dbang-legs-pa were based on central Tibetan block-prints. The murals were to include depictions of the famous cycle of moral tales and Jātakas called the *Avadāna Kalpalatā* (*dPag bsam 'khri shing*) composed in elegant verse by the Kashmiri poet Kṣemendra, with several traditional additions. For his model in illustrating these stories, the master painter used block-prints of the so-called "Hundred Deeds" (*mdzad pa brgya*) in the 18th-century sNar-thang xylograph version commissioned by Pho-lha-nas bSod-nams-stobs-rgyas (d. 1747) or his sons.[854] The lama in charge of the project, sGa-ston Ngag-dbang-legs-pa, and his assistants were well aware of the origin of the prints. They used them in connection with the written text of Kṣemendra's work in Tibetan translation as found in the Derge Tanjur.

Such block-prints helped establish standard composition schemes for certain subjects among painters from remote places, and in this case it was mainly the details of coloring and other techniques that distinguished one painting tradition from another. Sometimes, too, a great patron desired and requested (as the 2nd Dalai Lama, dGe-'dun-rgya-mtsho, once did, as described above) stylistic uniformity from the artists of different styles who worked under his patronage and direction. This encouraged similarity even on the level of coloring, shading, and so forth. And sometimes if a great need arose the patron might even ask the painter to break established iconographical laws and portray a figure in otherwise unwonted ways (as the 1st Dalai Lama, dGe-'dun-grub-pa, did when having the Buddha Vajradhara depicted in a mural at Tashilhunpo).

The above examples show the crucial role played in many paintings by such determining factors as authoritative examples, printed originals, written descriptions and even the overriding special wishes of the patron. The presence of the last two factors, however, is usually impossible to detect except through some fortuitous discovery in the written record. In most cases we must simply accept the possible existence of such factors; only well-informed masters from the relevant traditions or a well-read (or simply lucky) scholar will occasionally be able to unravel these particular threads of the story.

The careful use of written sources thus remains an essential tool, and as long as written histories, descriptions and inscriptions are not sufficiently taken into account, the study of Tibetan art history can only suffer. Yet until recently, the text-based historical foundation has been simply too slender to support the superstructure of the traditional terminology and classifications regarding the post-1450 styles. Given such a slender and precarious basis, it is no wonder that more than one competent publication in recent years have cautiously dismissed the subject with just a few vague statements,[855] or have briefly passed over the last five and a half centuries of Tibetan painting as "modern styles."[856] This in spite of the fact that the vast majority of surviving Tibetan art



Fig. 209. The Buddha Śākyamuni surrounded by episodes from the Avadāna Kalpalatā (dPag bsam 'khri shing). Xylograph, 18th-century, Narthang. After Tucci (1949), p. 535, fig. 121.

dates to this later period. The curious result of this neglect is that the art styles in Tibet dating to before the mid 15th century are probably better known (at least they have been more intensively and systematically investigated) than those from 1450 onward. I therefore hope that the present study will provide the beginnings of a more solid foundation and that on this basis others will be able to continue the investigation also of later periods of Tibetan painting—periods which the Tibetans themselves have all along considered to include some of the high points in the development of their religious art.

Meanwhile there remains plenty to do. Historians of Tibetan art are unlikely to complete even their preliminary explorations of the surviving pictorial materials in the near future. It is said, for example, that the 15th-century master Bo-dong paṇ-chen himself personally commissioned the painting of five hundred thangkas during his lifetime. Two centuries later the Great Fifth Dalai Lama similarly commissioned so many religious art works and implements that the record thereof formed a large part of a three-volume work in his collected writings.[857] And while those two great personages were no doubt unusually prolific as patrons, surely it was quite common for a single master to have commissioned one or two dozen thangkas in the course of a lifetime. Once painted, the thangkas could with reasonable care remain in good condition for centuries. As a result, the number of paintings that formerly existed in the monasteries and households of Tibet was simply enormous, and even the widespread barbarism of the "Cultural Revolution" could not come near to destroying them all. In Tibet itself, thousands of thangkas still exist in the few main surviving monasteries and in the Potala.[858] No doubt quite a few more sacred treasures still remain in their places of concealment, waiting to be revealed when the long Stalinist nightmare of military occupation, secret-police terror and religious persecution finally ends.

To locate, document and interpret historically the most important of the surviving works, it will be useful to work together with learned Tibetan colleagues of different backgrounds, including monks, painters and lay scholars. Nowadays there seems less and less point in distinguishing between non-Tibetan and Tibetan modern art-historical scholarship, if our common aim is to try to reconstruct through careful and systematic studies the traditions of sacred pictorial art, one aspect of the manifold Buddhist culture that was and is Tibet. The few elderly learned lamas who could speak with authority and privileged information on the old styles have apparently all passed away by now. So the new generation of Tibetan scholars (both monastic and lay) are in some ways in the same position as the rest of us when it comes to art-historical studies—all sharing the same need to return directly to the sacred art works, their inscriptions, and the relevant historical documents. Only by doing so will we be able to do justice to our task and restore the precious jewel of old Tibetan painting to its rightful place within the venerable yet vibrant mosaic that is Tibetan civilization.

Notes

[836] In the future, as more and more of the Tibetan literary corpus is computerized, it should be a fairly easy task to gather many more such references.

[837] Secondarily, attention must be given to identifying not only dateable and attributable originals, but also to the tracing of subsequent copies—even quite recent ones—of paintings which originated from famous early prototypes.

[838] See also the pertinent remarks of E. Lo Bue and F. Ricca (1990), p. 57, in connection with the murals of Gyantse: "A detailed analysis of the chronology of the monuments ... is of crucial importance to establish a historical framework to enable the dating of southern and central Tibetan paintings and sculptures, of which few dated examples are known to exist. This is even more necessary because stylistic analysis alone is often misleading, owing to the persistence of styles dictated by iconographic convention and iconometric canonical rules, *as well as by the artists' habit of copying earlier images.*" (The italics are mine.)

[839] See D. Jackson (1986).

840 Kaḥ-thog rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu, *Grub thob chen po*, pp. 414–417. I am indebted to F.-K. Ehrhard for this reference.

841 Thar-lam monastery had been originally founded in the second half of the 1400s by sGa rab-'byams-pa Kun-dga'-ye-shes, a disciple of both Ngor-chen and Rong-ston.

842 sDe-gzhung Lung-rigs sprul-sku, p. 36b.

843 Khetsun Sangpo, vol. 5, p. 9, quoting Tshe-mchog-gling yongs-'dzin Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan, *Lam rim bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*, f. 181b.1: *de nas yar byon te ras khru bcu drug pa gcig la ri mo mkhan mkhas pa kṛṣṇa bya ba rgya gar ba gcig yod pa 'brir bcug nas/ stod la jo bo'i yi dam gyi lha rnams bris/ de'i 'og na phar la jo bo'i bla ma bcu gnyis po bris/ de nas jo bo rje nyid kyi sku tshad khrus gzhal te bris/ g.yas g.yon gnyis na nye gnas re ldebs skur bris/ g.yas g.yon gyi mtha' ras la jo bo'i mdzad pa rnams dang/ 'og na tshur khu rngog 'brom gsum la sogs pa bod ston rnams chos grwa'i tshul du bris/ de'i mdun du lo tsā ba nyid gsol ba 'debs pa'i tshul du bris/ de'i rgyab la jo bo'i bstod pa brgyad bcu pa bris/...* I have described this painting already in D. Jackson (1984), p. 43, n. 6.

844 H. Decler in a forthcoming article in the *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre* has mentioned such a reference in the *bKa' gdams glegs bam* (Śatapiṭaka, vol. 311 [New Delhi, 1982]), p. 290 (121b). Here the dge-bshes Gung-thang-pa (i.e. Nag-tsho lo-tsā-ba?) is said to have sponsored a very large painting showing the meeting between Atiśa and the Upāsika. The latter, in turn, commissioned a second large painting depicting Atiśa as the main figure with Lha-btsun-pa (Byang-chub-'od) and Gung-thang-pa before him. This painting further depicted "the king of Nepal accompanying them [to western Tibet], the welcome from the three districts of mNga'-ris, and other most wonderful scenes of various kinds."

845 As a more recent example, one could mention the murals in the new Zhe-chen monastery (at Bodhnath outside of Kathmandu) founded by the late Dil-mgo mKhyen-brtse. According to Matthieu Ricard, Bodhnath, March 1995, they were based on a written work found in volume 10 (*tha*) of the collected writings of 'Jam-dbyangs mKhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po, namely: *Gangs can bstan pa yongs rdzogs bris thang bdun gyi gtso bo mkhan slob gsum....* Dil-mgo mKhyen-brtse himself described and planned a portrayal of the life of 'Jigs-med-gling-pa in a set of seven thangkas. This too survives as a *bris yig* text, in the latter's (recently published) collected writings.

846 The early thangka of Mi-las ras-pa's life now in Los Angeles (see Pal 1983, p. 148) belongs to a 'Bri-gung-pa tradition. It has been dated provisionally to ca. 1500, i.e. precisely to the time of gTsang-smyon. The depictions of Mi-la's life should be made the subject of a study in their own right, in connection with the written accounts, now that the earlier *Bu chen bcu gnyis* version of the biography has been found in the Newark Museum. Another early biographical thangka (but of Phag-mo-gru-pa) is mentioned by Kaḥ-thog Si-tu, p. 256.1: *phag gru'i rnam thar bris rnying.*

847 rGod-tshang-ras-pa sNa-tshogs-rang-grol, *gTsang smyon rnam thar*, pp. 161.6f. (80a-b). For this reference I am indebted to F.-K. Ehrhard. The Tibetan text: *de nas rje mi la'i rnam thar dang mthun pa'i rnam thar thang ka 'di nyid sngar bod du ma grags zhing/ ma dar 'dug pas 'di nyid dar zhing rgyas pa cig byung na dgongs pa thugs la shar te/ rnam thar thang ka'i bris sku cig gung thang dang klo bo sogs stod la snang te mang du dang/ gcig phyag rang du bzhugs te la stod lho phyogs su mang du dar bar mdzad/ gcig rgyal po don yod rdo rjes gsol ba btab cing zhal gyis bzhed pa ltar dbus gtsang sogs smad phyogs rnams su dar bar gzhed te/ thugs sras bsod* [162] *nams grub pa la khyod kyi*[*s*] *rnam thar thang ka 'di bzhengs pa'i zhal bkod dang/ dbus gtsang rtsa ri sogs la spar 'gyed dang....* This passage was also referred to by E. Gene Smith in his preface to the work, p. 11, no. 29.

848 Oral information, Franz-Karl Ehrhard, Kathmandu, March 1994.

849 See Pascale Dollfus (1991), especially pp. 58–59 (the inscription below the main figure) and p. 71, n. 15. For this reference, too, I am grateful to F.-K. Ehrhard. One of these paintings is now in the Musée Guimet; see G. Béguin (1991), p. 69 and no. 24. Others are in the Musée de l'Homme (inv. D.34–6–11).

850 For this reference drawn from the unpublished collected writings of Brag-dkar rTa-so sprul-sku, *Chab shog skor* (Letters and Similar Writings), I am indebted again to F.-K. Ehrhard. See also above, Chapter 13 in the more detailed mention of Kun-bzang-phrin-las-dbang-phyug's career. Cf. the published paintings of this same theme in G.-W. Essen and T. T. Thingo (1991), especially p. 135, where, as I was informed by Dr. F.-K. Ehrhard, the inscriptions identify the deceased person for whose sake the thangka was made as mDo-chen Padma-rgya-mtsho. The inscription of the latter thangka was written by the above-mentioned Brag-dkar rTa-so sprul-sku Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug.

851 See also J. Huntington (1968), p. 122, and E. Lo Bue (1990), p. 184f., on the importance of wood-block prints for disseminating art styles. Huntington also refers to a book (which I have not seen) in which wood-block prints collected from two locales in Khams were reproduced: Wen Chin-Yang, *Ts'ang Tsu mu k'e Fu Hua I Sho* (Peking, 1960).

852 The existence of these blocks was referred to by Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs, p. 88.

853 Several paintings in the Musée Guimet have turned out under close examination to have been produced in this way. See G. Béguin (1991), nos. 30, 31, 36, 44, 45, 47–56. These include paintings stemming from famous sets of blocks portraying the lives of the Paṇ-chen Lamas and the Dalai Lamas, and the biography of Tsong-kha-pa. A very

interesting and previously unknown set of blocks is the one portraying the lineage lamas of the Lam-'bras tradition presented in G. Béguin (1994), that is, nos. 25. Birwa-pa (Virūpa), 26. Awadhūtipa, 27. a Tibetan lay master [Se-ston Kun-rig?], and 28. Ḍamarupāda. Four more paintings from this set would appear to be those shown in D.-I. Lauf (1976), as nos. 16. a Tibetan monk meditator, 22. Nag-po-pa (Kṛṣṇapāda), 29. a Tibetan learned monk in Paṇḍita's cap, and 30. an Indian paṇḍita-siddha (Gayadhara). For this lineage, see D. Jackson (1990), p. 131. In this series the artist has carefully distinguished between Tibetan and non-Tibetan dress and landscapes when depicting Tibetan and Indian saints.

[854] sDe-gzhung Lung-rigs sprul-sku, ff. 35a-37a. It was necessary to paint the figures representing the Buddha's past lives with gold, so in preparation sGa-ston Legs-pa Rin-po-che instructed his young assistant Dezhung Rinpoche (1906–1987) to consult those stories in volumes 91 (*ke)* and 92 (*khe*) of the Derge Tanjur, and then to paint with saffron dye the correct figures in each story. The saffron marking would indicate to the artists which figures were to be later painted gold.

On this set of sNar-thang prints, see also G. Tucci (1949), vol. 2, p. 440f., who described the thirty-one-block set, stating: "...The model became so authoritative that the various representations of the *dPag bsam akhri śiṅ*, diffused in Tibet, are nearly always inspired by this theme and reproduce it with unvarying fidelity." Tucci, p. 441, mentions not Pho-lha-ba but rather the latter's son 'Gyur-med-ye-shes-tshe-brtan (and also his son 'Gyur-med-rdo-rje-rnam-rgyal? see *ibid.*, p. 564) among the patrons and dated their carving to the 1740s. Tucci knew also a prose summary of Kṣemendra's work. For a reprint of this famous set of prints, see Sharada Rani ed. (1977), *Buddhist Tales of Kashmir in Tibetan Woodcuts.*

[855] R. A. Stein (1987), p. 200, who concludes: "D'autres écoles sont encore mentionnées, mais jusqu'ici on n'a guère trouvé de peintures qu'on pourrait attribuer à telle ou telle d'entre elles." His brief summary was based on E. G. Smith (1970) and H. Karmay (1975).

[856] See for instance A. Chayet (1994), pp. 184f., or R. Vitali in V. Chan (1994), p. 56f.

[857] Three volumes of the 5th Dalai Lama's works (*ma* to *tsha*) form the single work: *sKu gsung thugs rten bzhengs rin po che'i mchod rdzas khang bzang gi dkar chag dang tham phud deb khrims yig gi 'go rgyangs sde bzhi'i sgo 'bar phye ba'i skal bzang.* This work is devoted to recording inscriptions in commemoration of various religious projects in which he took part, including the making and consecrating of sacred images. Sometimes the names of artists are mentioned. As Tucci (1949), vol. 1, p. 135, noted nearly forty years ago, these volumes are "a precious collection, which the historian of Tibetan and Mongol art and schools of the XVIIth-XVIIIth centuries must consult." It has been profitably used for instance by Ariane Macdonald (1977), pp. 125, n. 10; 133; 148; etc., and had already been cited by A. Vostrikov (1970), p. 45, note 117, in the history of Tibetan historical literature that he wrote in the 1930s. Similar works are to be found in the collected writings of a few other Dalai Lamas, some beginning with the same phrase *sKu gsung thugs rten....*

[858] About ten thousand are said to survive in the Potala palace alone.

Part III

Concluding Matter

Appendices

The Main Tibetan Texts and Translations

The main traditional accounts of the great Tibetan painters and their traditions available for this study were those by the eight scholars:

A. sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho
B. De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs
C. Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen
D. Sum-pa mkhan-po Ye-shes-dpal-'byor
E. bDud-'dul-rdo-rje, Karma-pa XIII
F. Klong-rdol bla-ma Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang
G. Gu-ru bKra-shis
H. Kong-sprul Blo-gro-mtha'-yas

Brief descriptions of each work have been given above in Part I, Chapter 2. For future ease of access, the relevant passages from each of these have been presented below in romanized Tibetan text and in most cases with an English translation.

In addition, three further extracts have been given as appendices: (I) passages by 'Phreng-kha-pa and the 5th Dalai Lama from a xylographic colophon, (J) the relevant passage from the work *Ri mo mkhan rnams la nye bar mkho ba'i lag len dang sbyin bdag gi mtshan nyid*, and (K) the contributions of the recent traditional scholar W. D. Shakabpa from his two-volume political history of Tibet.

Appendix A

The Account of sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho

The following derives from the sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho's *bsTan bcos bai ḍū rya dkar po las dris lan 'khrul snang g.ya' sel don gyi bzhin ras ston byed*, known as the *Bai ḍū rya g.ya' sel* for short. The edition used here is that of T. Tsepal Taikhang, New Delhi, 1971, in two volumes, hand copied from an unclear print of the Zhol edition. (The Derge edition has been reprinted by the Tau Pon & Sakya Centre, Dehra Dun, 1976.) The text here runs as follows (vol. 2, pp. 643–4 = 255b-256a):

bod yul 'dir yang ... rje bla ma skyabs mgon chen po 'di'i sku'i skye srid gong ma chos rgyal mes dbon kyi dus bris 'bur gyi srol rgyun mang zhing khyad par bris la rdo rje gdan gyi ston pa'i sku tshad dgung lo nye lnga pa can la phyis dri bzang byugs par ras bkab ste bris rgyun spel ba rgya nag [?] dang bal po sogs na yod cing de cung bris rgyun mi legs par grag[s] shing bal po'i lha bzo bas bris pa'i bal bris zhes dang/

rjes su lha bzo la mkhas pa rdo pa bkras rgyal zhes par slob ma slob dpon las mkhas pa gnyis byung ba lho brag phyogs nas sman thang du sman bla don grub pa sku 'khrungs dang mnyam du lho brag sman thang gi mtshal kha yang thon/ na thog 'tshar ba dang/ rang gi chung ma dang ma mthun par yul 'khyar nas byon pa yar 'brog stag lung du pir snod dang bris dpe zhig rnyed pas bris la blo phyogs gtsang sa skya sogs bris shes e yod la phyin mthar rdo pa bkras rgyal dang thug pa'i [=pas] ri mo gsan mkhyen gyi tshul mdzad/

rang gi skye ba sngon ma rgya nag tu 'khrungs dus bris pa'i [256a] si thang rgya mdzad chen por grags pa de gzigs pa tsam gyis sngon gnas rjes dran gyi tshul bstan pa'i rgyal rigs [=rgya bris?] dang nye ba'i ldan lugs kyi ri mo 'di thugs la bkra lam gyi shar rgyud sde gnyis dang bstun yig cha mdzad cing tshugs chen brgyad la sha tshugs re dang/ na bza' rgyan sprod re bcas bcu drug gis gtan la phab ... skyabs mgon dam pa 'di'i yang srid gong ma paṇ chen dge 'dun grub la mnal lam du rje btsun sgrol mas sang 'jam dbyangs kyi sprul pa zhig 'ong ba yod ces lung bstan pa sman bla don grub pa dang mjal ba'i [=bas?] 'jam dbyangs kyi sprul par ngos zin pa sogs sman thang chen mo dang/

gong dkar sgang stod nas byung ba'i mkhyen brtse chen mo de gnyis so so'i bzhed pas lugs kyang cung zad mi mthun par gyur pa dang/

gzhan yang sprul sku bye'u zhes pa 'khrungs sa yar stod du byung ba bris la brtson pa bla lhag tu che ba'i rgyab tu byang shing dang shog dpe 'bral med du bcang zhing bris rgyun len pa dang bris dpe legs pa thos na len par phyogs mtha' myul ba zhig byung bar brten 'dra dpe'i sgo nas sprul sku 'di bye'u dang dbyer ma mchis zhes ming bye'ur thogs pa zhig byung 'dug pa de ni sman mkhyen dang cung mi mthun pa'i lugs bcas ri mo gsum du gyes pa'i tshul sogs deng sang bar dar rgyas che/

Here in Tibet too, in the time of the earlier life of the great teacher, this great Lord Protector [the 5th Dalai Lama], in the period of the [early Tibetan] religious kings—grandfathers and grandsons—there were many traditions of painting and sculpture. And in particular, for painting there

existed in China, Nepal, etc., a painting lineage which was propagated [based on a picture of the Buddha obtained] by anointing with scented [saffron] water the image of the Buddha as a twenty-five-year-old at Bodhgayā, and then covering it with a cotton cloth. It is widely held that this was a slightly deficient painting tradition, it being the "Newar-painting style" painted by the religious artists of Nepal.

Afterwards there appeared rDo-pa bKras-rgyal, who was expert in religious art and who had two students who were even more skilled than their master. [The first great student was] sMan-bla-don-grub-pa. Simultaneous with his birth at sMan-thang in the region of Lho-brag, the vermilion deposit of Lho-brag sMan-thang was also discovered. When he reached maturity, he did not get along with his wife, and so he [left her and] went wandering from district to district. At Yar-'brog sTag-lung he found a brush-box and some sample drawings, and because of this he became deeply interested in painting. He went to gTsang, to such places as Sa-skya, in order to see whether there was anyone who knew how to paint [well]. Finally he met rDo-pa bKras-rgyal, and studied painting under him.

[Later] by the mere sight of that silk painting called the "Great Chinese [-style depiction of the Buddha's] Deeds" (*rgya mdzad chen po*) which he had painted in China in a previous life, there vividly arose before his mind this lDan-tradition of pictures close to the imperial type [?] (*rgyal rigs*) through which he demonstrated recollections of a previous life. He composed a text [on religious art] in sixteen chapters in agreement with two tantras, establishing a system of a [prescribed] shape, dress and ornamentation for each of the eight great forms [or classes of deities].

Paṇ-chen dGe-'dun-grub, the previous life of this Noble Protector-Lord [the 5th Dalai Lama] [once] had a dream in which the Noble Lady [Goddess] Tārā foretold: "Tomorrow an emanation of Mañjuśrī will come." When he met sMan-bla-don-grub [the next day], [dGe-'dun-grub] identified him as an emanation of Mañjuśrī. This and further things are related about him, the Great Master from sMan-thang (*sman thang chen mo*).

[And the second great student of rDo-pa bKras-rgyal] was the Great Master mKhyen-brtse, who came from Gong-dkar sGang-stod. As a consequence of the individual opinions [or preferences] of the two, their traditions also became slightly different.

Moreover, [another great artist was] the one called "gifted-artist 'Bird'" (*sprul-sku Bye'u*). He was born in Yar-stod, and was exceedingly energetic in painting. He used to collect examples of painting styles, keeping his sketching board and drawing examples always strapped to his back, and if he heard of a good example of art, he would roam in all directions in order to fetch it. Because of that, he was given the name "Bird" on the basis of similarity, since people said "this gifted artist is no different than a bird." He had a style which differed slightly from that of sMan-thang-pa and mKhyen-brtse. That is how there came about a threefold division of painting styles. These and others have widely spread down to the present time.

Appendix B

Accounts from the Writings of De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs

PART 1

Two Passages from the Painting Manual of De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs

Two accounts of both traditional painting styles and the great Tibetan painters are found in De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs's painting manual, the *Kun gsal tshon gyi las rim me tog mdangs ster 'ja' 'od 'bum byin*, namely in chapters ten and thirty. The work was composed at De'u-dmar Zab-rgyas-chos-gling, perhaps in the 1720s or 30s. The following extracts have been drawn from a photocopy of *dbu-med mgo-tshem* manuscript, ninety folios in length. I indicate a few emendations between square brackets: [ ]. Another version (=C) of most of this passage, with generally better readings, appears in the work Ye-shes-shes-rab (Chengdu: 1990), ff. 24–27. I am indebted to Mr. Tashi Tsering for drawing my attention to both versions.

(1) Description of the Old Painting Traditions

Chapter ten of this manual deals with the story of previous painting traditions. A long passage from this chapter has been translated above in Part I, Chapter 2.

bcu pa sngon byung tshon srol gtam//

bcom ldan sangs rgyas shākya thub// lha yul gshegs nas lha gnas su// gso sbyong mdzad cing bzhugs pa'i tshe// (f. 23a) mi yul rgya gar gsal ldan yul// (1)

wa ra ṇa si'i grong khyer gyi// rgyal po u tra ya ṇa nyid// rab tu byung ba 'khor bcas kyis// thub pa'i dbang po dran tshe nas// (2)

ma bzod dran tshogs zhing rten du// tsan dan las byas ston pa'i sku// dngos 'dra 'bur du bzhengs pa yi// rten can grub des thub pa'i dbang// lha las bab tshe gom drug bsus// (3)

de la thub pas phyag sor gyis// bskul nas rgya nag chen po ru// 'gro ba'i don la bzhud cig gsungs// mod la nam mkha'i sprin bzhin du// (4)

gshegs de rgya nag chen po'i yul// pho brang bkra shis khri sgo'i mkhar// 'ja' 'od bzhin bkod tshangs par sprul// snang la rang bzhin med pa'i tshul// (5)

bzhugs de sku med rgyal pos mjal// de dus 'jam dpal sprul pa'i blon// zi chun phu sa then zhes des// zhal gzigs ji bzhin ras la [23b] bris// (6)

de bkod tshon sna stong phrag gcig// bsdab nas bris la zi thang [=then?] gi// si thang lugs 'di rgya nag dar// de yi tshon rgyun mi nyams phyir// (7)

de bzhin tshon bsdab stong phrag mdog// dar gos ras dang shog bu la// tshos bsgyur tshon byug lag len rgyun// ma nyams da lta'ang yod 'di'o// (8)

sku der rgyal pos gsol btab ngor// pho brang nang byon 'gro don mdzad// da lta shākya mu ne'i khrir// sku yi tshabs su [=tshab tu?] rgya nag tu// bzhugs pa tsan dan jo bor grags// (9)

rgya nag chen po'i phyag len gyis [=gyi]// tshon srol rgyud pa ma 'chad tsam// da lta bod 'dir rgya zi'i lugs// si thang ngo ma bri srol nyung// (10)

tshon sna gcig la mang bsgyur ba'i// lha ris bod las rgya las [=la?] med// rgya lugs tshon mang bskyar ba nyung// gnas [=gnam?] sa mdangs thabs kha shas dang// (11)

de bzhin brag sprin mdongs [=mdangs] thabs tsam// srog chags gzugs dang gos rgyan dang// [24a] gnas khang shing dang me tog dang// tshon gyis [=gyi?] rtsad [C=rtsal] bzang rdzogs par bsal [=gsal? C: bsal]// (12)

zhing khams skya la dang [=dwangs] pa dang// khyad par ba[r] dang ri thang mtha'// skya zhing shing ldum chu brag mang// mkha' dang sa chur rgyu ba yis [=yi]// (13)

bya 'brug ri dwags gcan gzan mang// mi srid srid bkod ngo mtshar ldan// gzhi [rgya] che zhing lha 'bras chung// lha mi tshom bur gnas pa la// (14)

zhing khams yul sa stong pa yang [=mang?]// sku rnams rus tshugs sha 'gyur dang// gos 'khyud sna tshogs nyams bzang ldan// zhi dul lhod cha bzhed [=bzhad? C: bzhed] nyams can// (15)

khri gdug dbu yol rgyab yol che// tshon zhib srab la dangs [=dwangs] pa dang// mdangs mang yal mtha' mi mngon gab// rtsa [C: rtswa] tshon ja [C: ljang?] kha la sogs pa// bcad byas cung zad rags la mngon// (16)

phyag len ma nyams zi thang 'di// khri srong lde'u btsan dus dar yang// bar nub [24b] dengs song [=deng sang] cung zad dar// de yi tshon sbyor 'di kho na// (17)

de dag kun las go logs par// tshon sna nyung la bskyor ba mang// sku las gnam sa zhing tshon rngam// (18)

de yang rtsing [=rtsi] 'thug mdangs thabs dkon// mdangs kun [g]sum mdangs shar bsgrigs 'dra// bcad rags phra sbom mnyam la mngon// gnam sa ri thang brag chu sogs// (19)

tshon rnams gdong sprad bcad mtshams las// dkyil zur stod smad srab 'thug med// lha 'bras che la zhing khams dog// kun kyang stod smad bkram la bkod// (20)

sku las shing brag ri sprin chung// dbu yol rgyab yol khri gdugs chung// cha lugs gos 'khyud rnam 'gyur nyung// phal cher 'gyur che sha rus dam// (21)

mig rtsa rgod che lhod cha med// bya dang ri dwags dkrog pa 'dra// tshugs las tshon rngam che la 'bad// de ni bod lugs tha [=thog? C: mtha'] ma yin// (22)

sbyar mthing [25a] sbyar spang mu ljang las// spang mthing med cing dmar cha che// gnam sa spel zhing bris 'dra las// yul bkod ri brag shing chu nyung// re gnyis byung la nyams 'brel dben// (23)

rus tshugs bzang la sha 'gyur bshen [=zhan?]// ngo [=ro] stod rgyas la smad zhum [khum?] bzlum// zhal 'khyil spyan ldems mdzub rtse 'gyur// (24)

gos 'khyud nyams zhan gcer bzung mang// pa ṭa shing brag sprin chu ris// lugs gcig nyid las rnam 'gyur med// (25)

sku dang gos 'khyud mdangs kho na// tshon mdangs gsal dang kha rtsi'i 'od// snum mdangs ldan pa bal po'i lugs// (26)

bod lugs snga ma'ang 'di ji bzhin// bal lugs ji lta nyid de las// sha tshugs bod dang 'dra ba la// yul nyams rnam 'gyur cung zad bzang// (27)

spyan bzlum mdzub rtse ma 'gyur ba// snga 'gyur skyu ra lha chen lugs// (28)

tshon mdangs dangs ma rngam snum chung// ri brag ltung [=chung or nyung?] la [25b] chu shing dang// bya dang ri dwags phyugs rigs mang// dbu thod chung la spyan bar dogs [=dog]// (29)

smar smin 'thug cing gdong pa nyag// mgrin phra sha chung lhu lag ring// rnam 'gyur bzang nyams ya ma bzung// mtshal zhan [C: zhag] li khri shin tu bzang// (30)

spang mthing med la chu tshon dang// shing tshon me tog tshon rig [=rigs] dang// sbyar tshon shas che mang ba de// rgya gar 'phags yul lha ris lugs// (31)

de la zhal stod cher rgyas shing// sku yi rnam 'gyur rab legs pa// shar phyogs bzo rigs dag las byung// (32)

tshon nyams rgya dang phyogs 'dra la// de nas [=las] cung zad rngam che zhing// kun la chu mdang bzang 'jam ldan// zhal spyan bzang grung sku sha skyong// (33)

bla sku zlum la dbu zhwa chung// bkod pa phal cher rgya dang mthun// 'di ni kar ma'i sgar lugs yin// (34)

tshon dang bkod pa bod phyir mtshungs// sku gzugs lhod la sku 'bras dangs// sha chung yan lag [26a] cung zad ring// spyan zim bcad ris shin tu phra// (35)

mdangs lhung [=lhug] tshon zhud [=khud?] shin tu 'jam// khri gdan rgyab yol che la mtho// rgyan dang rnam 'gyur tshon sna nyung// tshon kun nang nas mtshal pa che// (36)

rgyang bltas dmar shed rngam pa de// bod kyi lha bris zer zhing 'dug// (37)

sku 'bras zlum la sku sha rgyas// yan lag cung zad lhod nyams ldan// tshon sogs sgar lugs ji lta las// gos 'khyud dag la mdangs mi byed// 'di ni sprul sku byi'u lugs// (38)

tshon mdangs 'thug [la] bkod pa phal// rgya nag si thang ji lta las// de las cung zad bkod pa 'tshubs// tshom bur ma bkod cung zad bkram// (39)

rnam 'gyur rus tshug [=tshugs] sha tshugs bzang// mgrin tho [=mtho] phrag zhum [C=mtho?] dangs cha che// [26b] mdangs mang tshon zhib 'jam rngam snum// spang mthing shas che sngo ljang gis// (40)

rgyang shad [=shed, or shas?] che la bcar na zhib// gos 'khyud rnam 'gyur ya ma zung// tshon sna mang yang rgya las nyung// lha brgya'i nang nas snum mdangs che// (41)

mdangs shed cung zad che bas mngon// 'di ni sprul sku sman thang lugs// (42)

deng sang grags che ya thogs byed// lugs mang sna tshogs gces btus pa'i// mtha' gcig ma nges ngo mtshar rmad// phul chung [=byung?] legs cha che ba 'ga'// 'ba' sam 'di lugs ming 'dog med// (43)

bzang drung [grung?] nyams ldan 'jam mdangs snum// bkod mtshar srab mthug mdangs tshod ran// grim lhod sna tshogs tshug [=tshugs] 'gyur bzang// tshod [C:tshos or =tshon?] sna mi mang zhib cha che// (44)

cung zad sku che zhing khams dog// srog chags gzhan nyung yul bkod rgyas// bzo mtha' kun tshangs [=tshang] ya ma [27a] zung// 'di 'dra deng sang dkar shod pa'i// phyag bzhes legs la ming ma rnyed// (45)

de dag las 'gong gya ma do// 'chol bris grub mtha' med pa'i lugs// mang ba phal la ci cha yod// 'on kyang lugs mang mtha' 'byed dka'// de phyir nam mkha' 'dom [g]zhal bar// nongs pa gang mchis mkhas la bshags// // (46)

(2) The Traditional History

The following account is from the same work, chapter 30, ff. 55a ff., which treats the history of art and the differentiation of the three kinds of sacred "supports" (*rten*). The history of Tibetan sacred painting in particular, which in fact is just a sketch of some of the greatest painters, is found on ff. 63b-64b.

bod 'dir bzo rgyun dar dang gyes// 'phags pa'i bzo rgyun sna tshogs zhig// bram ze dung gi rna cha dang// bi shwa karma sa rba [=sarva] dznyā// mkhan po mthu mi saṃ bho tra// paṇ chen me tog sa dang ni//

skyu ra lha chen la sogs pas// tho ri snyan shal mes dbon gsum// sogs kyi dus bsgyur rjes 'brang la// bris rgyun ma nges sna tshogs dar//

phyis dus lha bzo phul du byung// rdo pa bkras rgyal zhe bya bar// slob ma rang las mkhas pa gnyis// byung ba lho brag sman thang du//

'khrungs pa'i sman bla don grub pas// yar 'brog stag lung du byon tshe// pir snod dang ni bris dpe zhig// rnyed pas bzo la mos pa sad//

gtsang stod sa skya la sogs phul [=nyul?]// gar yang bzo rgyun brtsal du byon// rdo pa bkras rgyal de dang mjal// ri mo'i rgyun gsan legs sbyangs tshe//

rang nyid tshe sngon rgya nag ru// zi thang mkhan por gyur pa yis// bris pa rgya mdzad chen po de// [f. 64a] gzigs ma thag tu sngon sbyangs dran//

rgyal rigs dang nye ldan lugs kyi// ri mo thugs la bkra lam sad// rgyud sde gnyis bstun yig cha mdzad// tshugs chen brgyad la sha tshugs dang// na bza' brgyan sprod te bcas pa'i// bcu drug gis ni gtan la phab//

sman thang chen mor grags tshe [=che] de// 'jam dpal dbyangs kyis sprul pa'i sku// yin pa rje btsun sgrol ma yis// paṇ chen dge 'dun grub pa la// lung bstan thob pas nges pa mdzad//

gangs [=gong] dkar sgang bstod [=stod] nas byung ba'i// mkhyen brtse chen mo zhes bya bar// bkras rgyal gyis bslab nyid las lhag// de gnyis so so'i bzhed lugs kyis// cung zad mi 'dra lugs gnyis dang//

gzhan yang yar lung du 'khrungs pa// bris la lhag par brtse che bas// byang zhing shog dpe 'bral med du// bcang nas bris rgyun gang rnyed len//

bris dpe legs yod thos gyur na// len phyir phyogs mtha' nyul bar brten// sprul sku 'di ni byi'u 'dra//

zhes smra mang bas 'dra [f. 64b] dpe yis// sgo nas byi'u par grags lugs// sman mkhyen lugs dang cung mi mthun//

tshugs las rang rgyun zun nges 'byung// de lta gsum la deng sang dus// lugs chen gsum zhes khung thub mdzad//

de gsum rigs la ma gtogs pa// bla ma mkhan po mkhas mang 'ga'// tshugs bzung rus bu bton pa'i rgyun// ma chad tsam pa gar yang snang//

PART 2

AN ACCOUNT BY DE'U-DMAR DGE-BSHES BSTAN-'DZIN-PHUN-TSHOGS FROM HIS EXPOSITION OF IMAGE-CONSECRATION

The following brief passage is from De'u-dmar dge-bshes bsTan-'dzin-phun-tshogs's treatise on the vivification of sacred images, his *Rab gnas kyi rgyas bshad,* p. 17:

bod 'dir sngar rgya bal gyi lugs dang khyad par bal lugs dar che bar phyis gsar rgyun ya ma zung zhig byung zhing/ phyis dus lha bzo phul du phyin pa rdo pa bkra rgyal bya ba byung ba'i slob ma lho brag sman lung du 'khrungs pa sman bla don 'grub dang/ gang [=gong] dkar sgang stod kyi mkhyen brtse chen mo gnyis byung ba yang bzo khyad cung mi 'dra ba so sor sman lugs mkhyen lugs zhes gnyis dang/ yar lung du 'khrungs pa sprul sku byi'u pa'i lugs te de gsum la lugs chen gsum zhes deng sang grags che ba'i rgyun tshad ldan dang/ gzhan thor bu lugs mtha' yod med sna tshogs las byung ba'i sku rten dang/

Here in Tibet previously the traditions of India and Nepal, and in particular the tradition of Nepal, were widespread, and later a new lineage with unbalanced proportions came into existence. In a later period there appeared the two disciples of the supremely expert artist rDo-pa bKra-rgyal—sMan-bla-don-grub who was born in Lho-brag sMan-lung and mKhyen-brtse chen-mo of Gong-dkar-stod—whose traditions, being slightly dissimilar in their distinctive features, became known as the two: the "sMan tradition" and "mKhyen tradition." There was also a third tradition, that of the sprul-sku Byi'u-pa, who was born in Yar-lung. The above three are widely known nowadays as the "three great traditions," and the physical representations of sacred figures [in Tibet] have come from their authentic lineages as well as from other miscellaneous [origins] which variously may or may not have been definite traditions.

Appendix C

An Account by Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen

The account of Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen from his *gTsug lag khang chos 'byung*, pp. 148.3–150.1 (ff. 11b-12b), is as follows:

khyad par bris sku ni rgya gar rdo rje gdan gyi ston pa dgung lo nyer lnga pa'i sku tshad can la dper byas pa'i bris rgyun rgya gar bal po la sogs pa la yod pa'i rgyun rnams phal cher bal po'i lha bzo bas bris pas bal bris zhes dar srol che ba byung ba dang/

phyi nas rim gyis mkhas pa bkra shis rgyal po zhes bya ba la/ slob ma rang las mkhas pa sman bla don grub pa zhes bya ba byung ste/ lho brag sman thang du sku 'khrungs pa dang lho brag sman thang gi mtshal kha yang thon pa byung zhing/ nar son pa dang sgra dang snyan dngags dang/ sdeb sbyor dang/ lānytsa dang/ wartu la dang/ na ga ra dang/ dha ri ka dang/ bod kyi yig rigs du ma la byang chub par mdzad/ 'di nyid rje btsun 'jam pa'i dbyangs kyi rnam 'phrul yin pa gdon mi za bar grags zhing/ rang gi chung mas yid 'byung ste yul 'khyams nas byon pa na/ yar 'brog stag lung du pir snod bcas dang bris dpe zhig rnyed/ de nas brtsams te bris la [12a] thugs phyogs te/ gtsang sa skya la sogs par lha bris mkhas pa 'tshol du phyin mthar/ mkhas pa bkra shis rgyal po dang thug nas/ de las ri mo'i tshul gsan cing byang chub par mdzad/ rang gi skye ba sngon ma rgya nag tu 'khrungs pa'i tshe bris pa'i zi'u thang rgya mdzod chen por grags pa de gzigs pa tsam gyis sngon gnas rjes su dran pa'i tshul gyis rgyal rigs dang nye ba'i ldan lugs kyi ri mo'i tshul thugs la bkra lam gyis shar ba byung/ gzhan yang ri mo'i ring lugs mang po dang/ dus kyi 'khor lo dang sdom pa 'byung ba rtsa 'grel gyi rjes su 'brangs nas/ sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rab tu byed pa yid bzhin nor bu zhes bya ba/ de bzhin gshegs pa'i mtshan dang dpe byad bshad pa/ mi 'thad pa'i phyogs kyi gzhung dgag pa/ tshad dang mi ldan pa'i skyon bshad pa/ tshad ldan gyi gzhung dgod pa/ tshad dang ldan pa'i yon tan brjod pa/ lha bzo dang sbyin bdag gi mtshan nyid/ lag tu blang ba'i rim pa rgyas par bshad pa ste bdun gyis gtan la phab pa mdzad do//

yang gong dkar sgang stod nas mkhyen brtse chen po zhes pa byung ba de gnyis so so'i lugs cung zad mi 'dra ba mkhyen lugs dang/ gzhan yang sprul sku bye'u zhes pa yar stod du 'khrungs shing bris la brtson pas shog dpe dang byang shing 'bral med du bcang zhing bris rgyun legs pa dang bris dpe legs pa 'tshol zhing phyogs kun du myul ba zhig byung bar brten/ sprul sku 'di bye'u dang dbyer ma mchis zhes 'dra ba rgyu mtshan du byas nas byi'ur ming thogs pa zhig ste/ de ni sman mkhyen [12b] dang ri mo'i lugs cung mi mthun pa bcas lugs srol gsum du gyes pa sogs las rim par dar rgyas su byung bar thos so//

In particular, regarding painted images, there appeared a widely spread tradition known as "Nepal-style Painting" (bal bris) because [paintings in this style] were mainly painted by Newar religious artists, though these painting styles, which took as their model for the Buddha image paintings the figure of the Buddha at Bodhgaya in which he has the proportions of a twenty-five-year-old, existed in India, Nepal and elsewhere.

Afterwards there appeared in succession the master named bKra-shis-rgyal-po and his student sMan-bla-don-grub, who was more expert than he himself. Immediately upon the birth of the latter at Lho-brag sMan-thang, the deposit of native vermilion of Lho-brag sMan-thang was discovered. When he became older, he mastered grammar, poetics, metrics, the lañcana, wartula, nāgara and dharika Indian scripts, and numerous Tibetan scripts. He was famed as being without a doubt the emanation of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.

He became disillusioned and disgusted with his wife, and he went wandering through many districts. During that time, once at Yar-'brog sTag-lung he found a brush with its case and also a drawing example. Beginning then, he became deeply interested in painting, and he went to such places as Sa-skya in gTsang in search of a master painter of sacred pictures. Finally he met the master bKra-shis-rgyal-po, and from him he learned and mastered the technique of painting. He once saw a silk thangka famed as the "Great Chinese Treasury" (*rgya mdzod chen po*) [better: "Great Chinese [-style depiction of the Buddha's] Deeds" (*rgya mdzad chen po*)] that he had painted in a previous lifetime when he had been born in China. Through remembrance of his previous existence, by the mere sight of it, there arose vividly in his mind a painting style of the lDan-tradition which is close to the "imperial type" (*rgyal rigs*). Moreover, following many traditions of art and especially the basic texts and commentaries of the Samvarodaya and Kālacakra Tantras, he composed a work entitled "A treatise on the correct proportions of sacred images, a Wish-granting Jewel" (*sKu gzugs kyi tshad kyi rab tu byed pa yid bzhin nor bu*), which set forth its subject according to seven main headings: (1) the exposition of the major and minor characteristics of a Tathāgata, (2) a refutation of the texts belonging to those holding incorrect positions, (3) an explanation of the faults of imperfect proportions, (4) an exposition of the system of correct proportions, (5) statement of the virtues of proper proportions, (6) characteristics of the artist and patron, and (7) a detailed exposition of the steps of artistic practice.

Also there appeared from Gong-dkar sGang-stod the one called "the Great Khyentse." The two individual styles were slightly different, and [Khyentse's style] was the mKhyen tradition.

Moreover, [another great artist was] the one called "gifted-artist 'Bird'" (*sprul-sku Bye'u*). He was born in Yar-stod. Because he was exceedingly energetic in painting, he always kept his drawing samples and sketching board with him, and he used to collect examples of painting styles, samples always strapped to his back, and he used to search for good traditions of painting and good examples of art, roaming in all directions. Because of that, he was given the name "[gifted-artist] 'Bird'" on the basis of similarity, since people said "this gifted artist is no different than a bird." He had a style which differed slightly from that of sMan-thang-pa and mKhyen-brtse. Thus there came about a threefold division of painting styles. These and others have widely spread down to the present time. So I have heard.

Appendix D

The Account Given by Sum-pa mkhan-po Ye-shes-dpal-'byor

The following brief passage occurs in Sum-pa mkhan-po's well-known history of Buddhism, the *dPag bsam ljon bzang* (completed 1747?). In the edition of Sarat Chandra Das (1908), the passage occurs on page 137:

de dag rgyun bod du dho pa bkra rgyal dang lho brag sman thang pa 'jam dbyangs pa don grub pa dang gos dmar [=gong dkar] sgang stod pa mkhyen brtse dang yar stod pa lha bzo bye'u sogs las chos dbyings rgya mtsho'i bar byung la/ rgyal ba'i sku bris 'bur gnyis ka rgya gar bal po'i bzang la bod kyi 'bring zhing rgya nag gi tha ma'o//

The continuation of [these art traditions] appeared in Tibet, from such [master artists] as Dho-pa bKra-rgyal, sMan-thang-pa 'Jam-dbyangs-pa Don-grub-pa, [Gong-dkar] sGang-stod-pa mKhyen-brtse, Yar-stod-pa lha-bzo Bye'u, down to Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho. Regarding both figures and paintings of the Buddha, Newar ones are excellent, Tibetan ones are middling, and Chinese ones are the worst.

Appendix E

The Account of bDud-'dul-rdo-rje, the 13th Karma-pa

The following lines have been compiled from the quotes in E. Gene Smith (1970), who on page 42, note 72, describes the work as "the verse *Dpyad don tho chung* written for the Tshong-dpon Bsam-grub-tshe-ring by the 13th Rgyal-dbang Karma-pa Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje (1733–1797)." This versified treatise is not otherwise available to me.

(f. 23a)
thang sku bod 'dir thog mar bal ris te//
dkyil 'khor dang ni rgyud sde'i lha sogs legs//
mkhyen brtses bod ris legs pa'i srol btod cing//
lhag tu rgyud sde'i sku ni chos cher 'phags//
de rjes sman thang yab sras sman rnying zhes//
cung zad tshon srab nyams gyur de bas che//

rim gyis tshon srab nyams 'gyur khyad par can//
de bas tshon srab yul ljongs rgya ris lugs//
nam bkris phyag bris sgar ris zhes su grags//

rje btsun bcu pa'i phyag bris kha che li'i//
nyams 'gyur ngo mtshar zla bral chen po'o//

Appendix F

The Account of Klong-rdol bla-ma Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang

The following is the text of the relevant passage from Klong-rdol bla-ma's *bZo dang gso ba skar rtsis rnams las byung ba'i ming gi grangs*. In his Collected Writings, the passage occurs in part 16 (*ma*), pp. 756–7 (7a-7b):

sku gzugs kyi cha tshad ston pa'i bstan bcos dang ri [7b] mo ni/ lho brag tu 'khrungs pa sman bla don grub rgya mtsho sman thang pa yab sras gnyis/ de'i rjes 'brang yul gtsang pa dbu mdzad chos dbyings rgya mtsho/ yar lung du 'khrungs pa'i byi'u lha bzo/ dwags po zhun thing ba'i dag ris/ gong dkar stod du 'khrungs pa sprul sku mkhyen brtse ba/ sprul sku sne'u chung ba/ sprul sku ri mkhar ba/ sprul sku phreng kha ba/ dbu mdzad bstan 'dzin nor bu rnams kyi[s?] mdzad pa la tshad mar 'dzin pa mang bas/ de dag phal cher gyi lugs la 'di ltar ro//

Concerning treatises and drawings which show the proportions of divine figures, there are many who hold as authoritative the works of sMan-bla-don-grub-rgya-mtsho born in Lho-brag, sMan-thang-pa, together with his son; his follower the dbu-mdzad Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho from gTsang; the artist Byi'u born in Yar-lung; the Dwags-po style of Zhun-thing-ba of Dwags-po; sprul-sku mKhyen-brtse-ba born in Gong-dkar-stod; sprul-sku sNe'u-chung-ba; sprul-sku Ri-mkhar-ba; sprul-sku Phreng-kha-ba; and dbu-mdzad bsTan-'dzin-nor-bu. Therefore, the tradition of most of the above is as follows:....

Appendix G

Excerpts from the Account in Gu-ru bKra-shis's History

The history of Buddhism by Gu-ru bKra-shis (commonly known as just the *Gur bkra'i chos 'byung*) in its chapter devoted to the history of art and techniques (*bZo rig pa'i skabs*) repeats the usual account about sMan-thang-pa, mKhyen-brtse and Bye'u, a tradition deriving ultimately from sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho. I have not repreated this passage here. But the beginning and concluding parts differ somewhat from the other sources, and they warrant quotation. Here is the text, pp. 1002–1004:

bod kyi yul 'dir ni/ sngon chos rgyal mes dbon gyi dus sprul pa'i bzo bos byas pa mang la/ de nas rim par sngon bris 'bur gnyis ka rgya bal gyi lag rgyun shas che las/ phyis 'bur bal lha dang bris rgya nag gi ri mo dang mthun shas che ba byung zhes zer ba ltar de dang de'i lugs srol dang 'dra rung du snang mod/ lha btsan khu dbon gyi [p. 1003] dus bris 'bur gyi srol rgyun mang zhing khyad par bris la rdo rje gdan gyi ston pa'i sku tshad dgung lo nyer lnga pa can la phyis dri bzang byugs par ras bkab ste bris rgyun spel ba rgya gar dang bal po la dwags sogs na yod cing de cung mi legs par grags shing bal po'i lha bzo bas bris pa'i bal bris zhes dang/

de rjes su lha bzo la mkhas pa rdo pa bkras rgyal zhes par slob dpon las mkhas pa'i slob ma gnyis byung ba lho brag phyogs nas sman thang du sman bla don grub sku 'khrungs pa dang mnyam du.... [The standard account about sMan-thang-pa, mKhyen-brtse and Bye'u is here omitted.]

yang/ kar ma pa mi bskyod zhabs kyi dus sprul sku nam mkha' bkra shis zhes pa'i [=pa] ri mo la shin tu mkhas pa zhig byung ste zhwa dmar lnga pa'i ljags bkod ltar rgya nag dang mthun pa'i bris rgyun spel ba la sgar bris zer te 'di karma pa nyid kyi sprul pa yin par yang grags te bris rgyun shin tu legs/

sprul sku nga la gzigs ni/ gtsang rta nag tu 'khrungs/ dbyangs [can] ma'i sku zhig bris pas ri mo byed tshul la ma bde ba zhig byung ba na dbyangs can mas zhal dngos su bstan nas sprul sku nga la gzigs dang gsungs pas/ de phyin sprul sku nga la gzigs su grags te rig pa'i gnas kun la mkhas te sprul sku 'phrang kha ba yang zer/ paṇ chen dge 'dun grub pas [=rgyas mtshos] gangs can tsam na ri mo mkhas pa'i mchog tu bsngags [p. 1004] so//

de rjes gtsang pa chos dbyings rgya mtsho ri mo shin tu mkhas pas sku tshug sman rnying sor gzhag la thugs kyi klong rdol ba'i ri mo'i rnam 'gyur sna tshogs kyis mdzes par byas pa la sman gsar du grags te 'di yang rgyal ba'i dbang po karma pas ri mo mkhas par 'byung bar lung bstan pa yin 'dug/

dus phyis kun mkhyen bstan pa'i nyin byed kyis chag tshad rgyud/ sde dang mthun par 'phags yul dbus kyi bzo bkos ltar la/ rgya gar bal yul bod dang rgya ris kyi yul snang sogs shin tu mdzes par phyag bris dang zhal bkod kyi bris rgyun mdzad de/

'di dag ni lhag pa'i lhas byin gyis brlabs pa'i ri mo ba yin pas khyad par du 'phags la/ gzhan bzo bo so so'i lag rtsal gyis ri mo 'dra min du ma snang ba rnams la dpyad pas mi khyab cing/. [Here follows a brief account of Buddhist sculpture in Tibet.]

Appendix H

The Account of Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas

The following is the text on Tibetan Buddhist art from Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas's *Shes bya kun khyab.* The full title of this "encyclopedia"—which was one of Kong-sprul's five great compilations or "treasuries" (*mdzod*)—is: *Theg pa'i sgo kun las btus pa gsung rab rin po che'i mdzod bslab pa gsum legs par ston pa'i bstan bcos shes bya kun khyab.* The text, pp. 570.1–573.4 (*oṃ* 208a-209b) runs as follows:

de dag ni bris 'bur lugs brkos la shin tu mkhas shing de'i rgyun srol 'dzin pa rnams rim bzhin dbus bzo dang/ nub rnying gi lugs/ shar gyi bzo zhes zer/ shar gyi lha'ang pha'i rjes 'brangs shar ris dang/ bu'i rjes 'brangs ma ga dhār dar bas dbus kyi ri mor ngos 'dzin no/

bal po sngon bar nub rnying shar dang mthun//
kha cher dbus dang nub rnying rang srol gsum//

bal po'i yul du'ang sngon gyi bzo rgyun nub rnying dang 'dra/ bar skabs kyi bris dang li ma ni shar dang mthun shas che ba'i bal bris rang lugs yin la phyis ni nges pa med/ kha cher yang sngon dbus dang nub rnying gi rjes su 'brang/ phyis ha su rā dza zer ba zhig gis bris 'bur gnyis ka'i srol gsar pa btod pa'i lugs la deng sang kha che ma zer/ gang na sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa yod pa na lha bzo yang mkhas pa dang/ gang na kla klo dbang byed sar lha bzo nub/ gang mu stegs dar sar lha bzo yang mi mkhas pa dag dar ba'i phyir/ yul de rnams su gong du smos pa de dag gi srol deng sang cher med/
pukkaṃ dang lho phyogs kyi rgyud du phyis su'ang sku gzugs bzhengs pa dar po yod la/ de dag gi bzo rgyun bod du sngar ma byung bar mngon/ yul der ni dza ya zhes pa dang/ pā rā dza ya dang/ bi dza ya zhes pa rgyal ba dang/ gzhan las rgyal ba dang/ rnam par rgyal ba zhes gsum gi rjes su 'brang ba shin tu mang ba yod par bshad do//

gnyis pa bod du byung tshul ni/

bod du chos 'khor rnam gsum sku rnams snga//

bod yul du sprul pa'i rgyal po srong btsan sgam po'i dus khra 'brug gi rten gtso rnams rang byon kho nar [208b] grags pa dang/ ra sa'i rang 'byung thugs rje chen po sogs dang/ khri srong gi dus bsam yas byang chub chen po gtso bor gyur pa'i chos 'khor rnam gsum gyi sku brnyan bris 'bur rnams byung bar snga la/ de'ang sku brnyan bris dpe snga shos thub pa chu lon ma ni stag tshang lo tsās rdo rje gdan gyi byang chub chen po la dri bzang gi chus byugs par ras gtsang gsher ba bkabs te blangs pas byin rlabs kyis phyag gnyis thad kar byon pa de la dpe bgyis te bris rgyun spel ba yin ces gsungs/ gzhan dag gong smos la bzhed kyang/ 'di la mgul thung zheng du rgyas pa sogs la brtags na phyi ma 'di 'thad dam snyam la/ de'i phyir cha tshad dang sbyar du med cing/ ltar snang cung zad mi mdzes kyang yongs grags bris rgyun kun gyi tshad ma'i gnas yin no//

ri mo bal ris rgyun la sman mkhyen gnyis//
byi'u'i lugs gsum bkra shis rnam gsum nas//
sgar bris srol dod 'bur bzo'ang rim mkhas gyur//

ri mo ni thog mar bal ris kho na dar srol che ba las/ ji zhig na 'jam dpa'i dbyangs mi yi tshul can sman bla don grub zhabs lho brag sman thang du

sku 'khrungs pa dang/ yul de'i mtshal kha yang bye/ chung ma'i rkyen gyis yul 'khyar te gtsang du byon nas rdo pa bkra shis rgyal po las ri mo gsan/ sku skye ba snga ma rgya nag tu 'khrungs dus kyi ri mo si thang gzigs pas sngon gnas dran te sman thang chen mor grags pa sogs phul du byung ba'i ri mo'i rgyun mdzad cing sras brgyud dang slob brgyud gnyis kyi rgyun byung/

yang mkhyen brtse chen mo zhes gong dkar sgang stod du byung ba des kyang snga ma las zur du bzo rgyun mdzad de sman mkhyen gnyis zhes gangs can du nyi zla ltar grags pa'i shing rta'i srol so so bar gyur/

gzhan yang bzo gnas 'di'i ched du ngal ba med par myul bas sprul sku byi'ur grags pa rig rtsal bla na med pas bzo rgyun snga ma gnyis ka dang mi gcig pa [209a] tshon mdangs ni gzhan las kyang khyad par 'phags pa zhig byung/ phyis su gtsang pa chos dbyings rgya mtshos sman gsar gyi srol btod/ de sogs bzo rgyun gzhan du ma byung yang gtso cher snga ma de dag gi khongs su gtog[s]/

yang yar stod du sprul sku nam mkha' bkra shis zhes grags pa byung/ rje mi bskyod zhabs kyis nyid kyi sprul pa sku gzugs kyi 'phrin las spel ba por lung bstan/ zhwa dmar dkon mchog yan lag dang rgyal tshab grags pa don grub kyis zhal bkod mdzad de/ e nas skal ldan shar phyogs pa dkon mchog phan bde bya ba rgya mo bza' kong jo'i sprul par grags pa de las sman ris kyi rgyun bslabs/ rus tshugs rgya gar li ma dang sman thang lugs gzhir bzhag pa la tā ming dus kyi si thang bzhin yul ljongs bkod pa sogs dang tshon mdangs mdzad pa la sgar bris su grags pa'i bri rgyun 'di byung/

de rjes chos bkra shis bya ba zhig byung bar grags zhing/ phyis su kar shod karma bkra shis zhes ri mo'i lam srol la 'gran zla bral ba'i rgyun da lta'ang gnas pa bcas mdor na bkra shis rnam pa gsum gyis sgar bris srol rgya chen btod/

de bzhin du 'bur la phul du byung ba ni/ sprul sku sle'u chung pa dang/ padma mkhar pa gnyis yin la/ phyis su sgar lugs la mkhas pa dwags po sgo pa'i zhal ngo sku mdun karma srid bral lam sgo smyon zhes mtshungs pa med pa'i blo gros can rje brgyad pa'i sku'i sprul par grags pa de dang/ karma rin chen sogs du ma byung ba'i rgyun de dag ni da lta mi snang la/ gong sa lnga pa chen po'i dus su byung ba'i e pa lkugs pa'am hor dar ces pa dang/ sprul sku bab phro zhes sprul pa'i bzo bor grags pa de dag gi rgyun las phyis su 'bur la khyad par 'phags pa 'dod dpal gyi bzo rgyun byung bar nges so/

khyad par bzo sbyong 'jig rten dbang phyug mchog// [209b]
gtsug lag chos kyi snang ba'i rnam dpyod ni//
tshur mthong blo 'das mig gi bdud rtsir 'gyur//

de dag thams cad las khyad par du 'phags pa bzo sbyong 'jig rten dbang phyug dpal karma pa chos dbyings rdo rje'i zhal snga nas sman lugs pa lho brag chus khyer sprul sku tshe ring las ri mo gsan te sku tshe'i stod du sman lugs sor bzhag dang/ smad nas si thang dang kha che'i bzo rgyun bzhin mdzad de bris 'bur gnyis/ si thang phyag drubs dang bcas pa da lta mngon du mjal ba 'di rnams dang/

phyis su thams cad mkhyen pa gtsug lag chos kyi snang ba'i rnam dpyod las 'khrungs pa'i bris 'bur rnams ni tshur mthong gi blo yi ra ba las 'das shing rdzu 'phrul chen po'i bkod pa da lta tha mal pa rnams kyi'ang mig gi bdud rtsir mngon sum gyur pa ste/ de ltar khyad par du 'phags pa'i tshul skyes rabs dpag bsam 'khri shing gi zhal thang rtogs brjod kun mkhyen bla ma nyid kyi gsung las gsal lo//

[Accounts of Indian and early Tibetan art omitted.]

Regarding [Tibetan Buddhist] painting: from the tradition of the Newar Style [there arose] the sMan-ris and mKhyen-ris. The Byi'u tradition was the third. The Encampment Style [was founded] by the three [painters with the name] bKra-shis. For the art of sculpture too there was a series of masters.

Concerning [Tibetan] painting, at first only the Newar style was widely established. Then at a certain time [there appeared] Mañjuśrī in human form: the revered sMan-bla-don-grub. Simultaneous with his birth at sMan-thang in Lho-brag, the native vermilion deposit of that district was discovered. Because of [incompatibility with] his wife, he wandered from district to district, and after reaching gTsang, he studied painting under rDo-pa bKra-shis-rgyal-po. Through seeing a

(Chinese) scroll painting whose picture he had painted in a previous lifetime in China, he remembered his previous life, and afterward he became famed as the great master of sMan-thang, and so forth. He established a superior painting tradition, and there appeared from him both a family lineage and a disciple lineage.

The great master mKhyen-brtse, who appeared in Gong-dkar sGang-stod, also established an artistic lineage distinct from the above, and there came into being the separate basic traditions of sMan-[style] and mKhyen-[style], as famous in Tibet as the sun and moon.

Moreover [there appeared] an artists who became famed as the "gifted artist 'Bird'" because he wandered tirelessly for the sake of this field of knowledge, art. Since his art was of the highest sort, there appeared an artistic tradition that was different from the above two and which was superior to the others in its colors and shading. Later, the gTsang native Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho founded the New sMan-ris tradition. Although it and numerous other artistic traditions have come into being, chiefly they are included within the previous ones.

Also there appeared in Yar-stod the one known as sprul-sku Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis. The lord [Karma-pa] Mi-bskyod [rdo-rje] prophesied the above to be his own emanation who would increase his enlightened activities regarding sacred images. The Zhwa-dmar dKon-mchog-yan-lag and rGyal-tshab Grags-pa-don-grub gave instructions [about what he should model his style after], and he studied the sMan-ris tradition from sKal-ldan shar-phyogs-pa dKon-mchog-phan-bde of E, who was famed as being the emanation of the Chinese royal consort Kong-jo. He took for the skeletal structure Indian cast-metal figures and the sMan-thang tradition as his basis, and executed his colors, shading and such things as the landscape layout like the silk thangkas (*si thang*) of the Great Ming period, and [through his efforts] this painting tradition known as the Encampment Style (*sgar bris*) came into being.

After him it is widely reputed that there appeared [a painter] named Chos-bkra-shis. And later there also was one called Kar-shod Karma-bkra-shis, [an artist] who was incomparable in the practical tradition of figurative art, whose tradition remains even now. In brief, the three bKra-shis widely established the tradition of the Encampment Style.

[SECTION ON GREAT SCULPTORS OMITTED.]

In particular, the supreme art-practicing Lokeśvara, [the 10th Karma-pa, and] the discernment of the omniscient [Si-tu Paṇ-chen] gTsug-lag-chos-kyi-snang-ba surpass the sphere of an ordinary mind and become nectar for the eyes.

Superior to all of the above was the art-practicing Lokeśvara, the glorious [10th] Karma-pa Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje. He learned painting from the Lho-brag Chus-khyer sprul-sku Tshe-ring, and he took as the basis [for his painting] in the first half of his life the tradition of sMan [thang-pa]. In the second half of his life he practiced [art] according to [Chinese] silk paintings and Kashmiri art traditions. The paintings and sculptures that he made, together with silk-appliqué thangkas, are the ones which one can now directly experience.

And the paintings and sculptures that arose from the discernment of the omniscient [Si-tu paṇ-chen] gTsug-lag-chos-kyi-snang-ba surpass the sphere of an ordinary mind, and their greatly magical projections are directly perceived as an "eye nectar" even for ordinary people today. And how his paintings of the Buddha's Previous Lives in the "Wish-granting Vine" (*Kalpalatā: sKyes rabs dpag bsam 'khri shing*) cycle were thus supreme is described in the omniscient master's own writings.

Appendix I

Comments by the 5th Dalai Lama and a Poem by 'Phreng-kha-ba

An interesting reference to 'Phreng-kha-ba is found in the final prose section of the 5th Dalai Lama's colophon to the 1675 Zhol edition of sMan-thang-pa and 'Phreng-kha-pa's main treatises on art. The two main patrons of the project mentioned in the colophon were the Bya-rigs paṇḍita rNam-gling dKon-cog-chos-grags and the expert artist gTing-skyes-pa Tshe-dbang-lhun-po. Appended at the end of this colophon, before the brief colophon to the subsequently recut blocks (dated 1927), is an alphabetically ordered poem by 'Phreng-kha-pa himself.

The following transcription is from an *dbu-med* hand-copy of the 1927 block-print edition, ff. 29b-30b. It was brought to my attention by Mr. Tashi Tsering. See also the text as given in Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, pp. 36–37.

ces gangs ri'i ljongs 'dir sman mkhyen gnyis zhes nyi zla lta bur grags pa'i nang tshan sman bla don grub kyis mdzad pa'i cha tshad bde bar gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rab tu byed pa'i yid bzhin nor bu dang/ sgra dbyangs lha mos rjes su bzung ba 'phreng kha ba dpal ldan blo gros bzang pos mdzad pa'i cha tshad kyi yi ge gnyis par du brko ba'i 'dun pa yod pa'i steng/ bya rigs gnas lnga smra ba rnam gling dkon cog chos grags dang/ bris 'bur gyi tshul la blo mig yangs pa gting skyes pa tshe dbang lhun po gnyis kyis 'tshams sbyar ba'i rkyen gyis rab 'byung bcu gcig pa'i srin po zhes pa shing yos [1675]/ dga' ldan phun tshogs gling du brkos pa'i par byang 'di ni za hor gyi ban tshangs sras bzhad pa'i rdo rjes sbyar ba'i yi ge pa ni rig 'dzin gyi btsun pa 'jam dbyangs grags pas bgyis pa dza yantu//

gu ru wā gī shwa ra swa ra dī wī na maḥ/

ka ma la ltar dga' ldan lha las 'babs// kha ba can na dpal dang grags pa 'bar//
ga na gnas kyang bstan pa rgyas mdzad [30a] pa//
nga cag lhar bcas bla ma zhabs brtan 'tshal//

ka ba'i tshogs rnams gsal mdzes gzhal med khang//
kha bad mkha' snyeg 'od stong 'gugs pa bzhin//
ga bur bhugs pa bas kyang dkar mdzes 'di// nga las nu yi pho brang las kyang rgyal//

ka gzhu la sogs shing dang rtsig ngos la// kha dog dbyibs legs ri mo'i bkod pa'i tshogs//
ga na'ang skyon bral 'di zhag bzhi bcu la// nga min lha bzo gzhan gyis ji ltar grub//

ka ca ma bsags bla ma mnyes bya'i phyir// go cha bgos nas tshul 'dir ngal ba byas//
rgya ja la sogs rnyed dang grags 'dod min// zla nya bas kyang lhag bsam dkar ba'i so//

ta thā ga ta'i ston gsal sgo khang du// tha mal ri mo mkhan tshe thugs bskyed nas//
da lta'i bskal pa 'di la 'tshang rgya ba// na rga rmongs pa'i dri med rgyal po ltar//

pa tra la sogs ri mo 'bri 'bri nas// pha rol ma phyin tshur rol mthong ba bdag//
ba gam mtho ldan 'di bris dge ba des// ma lus chos kun gzigs pa nyid gyur cig//

tsa tsi ka dang dbyangs can gau rī sogs// tsha zer can pas mun la sdang ba sogs//
dza sa de ru'i sa bon las bskyed de// zhwa ler bsgoms pas nyin mtshan 'da' bar shog//

zha bo'i rjes 'gro lus kyi khang hrul 'dir// za ma'i grangs thems pha rol 'gro ba'i tshe//

'a 'ur sgra sgrogs gshin rje mthong ma gyur// ya mtshan gter chen sangs rgyas kun mthong shog//

ra sa 'khrul snang las rgyal gtsug lag khang// la klung kun tu grangs med 'debs nus shing//

sha khrag la yang gtong phod mthar phyin pa'i// sa mchog rab tu dga' ba myur thob shog//

ha ri tsan ldan [30b] ltar bsil chos chu'i char// a ti shas bzhin 'gro la 'bebs gyur cig//

ha cang snyigs ma'i me lngas bsregs pa dag// a don skye med rtogs nas rab zhi shog//

thams cad mkhyen pa'i sku tshe 'phrin las dang// sde 'dir srid dang zhi ba'i dpal 'byor dang//

bdag gi rgyud la bsod nams ye shes tshogs// 'gran pa bzhin du 'phel ba'i bkra shis shog//

de skad brjod 'di snyan ngag mkhan// rgyal ba'i sku gsung thugs rten gyis// 'gro mdzes byed la chas gyur pa// dpal ldan blo gros bzang pos so//

thams cad mkhyen pa dge 'dun rgya mtsho'i gzims chung nyi 'od 'khyil ba zhes bla ma na rim gyi bsti gnas dang// rdo rje 'chang sngags rams pa dge 'dun bkra shis kyis 'phreng ba zhe lnga pa'i sgrub mchod dang 'brel ba'i dbang bskur mdzad pa sogs byin can de thog mar bskrun pa'i ldebs bris dang shing rtsi rnams dbyangs can mas rjes su bzung ba sprul sku 'phreng kha bas mdzad tshul/ nyid kyi thugs rtsom gyang bris su 'dug pa gzims chung chos 'khor gling gi grwa khang la bshig skabs ngos bshus byas pa'i khungs btsun bris pa sarwa mangga laṃ//

rgyal bstan spyi dang bzo rig mtshor// don gnyer ngang mos rtsen pa'i phyir//

dga' ba brgya ldan pho brang ches// 'dzad med chos sbyin char 'di dbab//

rab 'byung rgyal po'i lor gangs can phan bde'i gter mdzod gling du par du bskrun pa'o//

Appendix J

The Account of Painting Styles Found in the Manual *Ri mo mkhan rnams la nye bar mkho ba'i lag len dang sbyin dbag gi mtshan nyid*

A brief versified account of the traditional styles is found in the work *Ri mo mkhan rnams la nye bar mkho ba'i lag len dang sbyin bdag gi mtshan nyid.* This manual of painting practice forms part of a 350–page volume entitled *Ri mo'i thig tshad dang tshon gyi lag len tshad ldan don du gnyer ba rnams la nye bar mkho ba mthong ba don ldan.* One section of this work, called *Bris rgyun byung ba'i lung bstan pa,* treats the subject of stylistic classifications (pp. 142–145):

de nas bris rgyun byung ba'i lung bstan pa//

sngon tshe lo 'bum [phrag?] gi tshe// rgyal po gcer thul zhes bya thab bzo'i bu//

ri mor bris pa tshangs pas byin rlabs nas// mi ru dngos su gyur 'di 'jig rten 'dir// (1)

ri mor bris pa kun gyi thog ma yin// de nas rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas bzhugs pa'i dus//

sgra sgrog rgyal po u tra ya na la// gzugs can snying pos skyes su bskur ba ni// (2)

ston pa'i sku dkyil mjal bas mi ngom par// ri mo mkhan gyis bri bar ma nus pas//

sku gzugs chu nang gsal bar dpe byas nas// bris pas zhal thang chu len ma zhes grags// (3)

gnyis pa singga li yi rgyal po yi// mu tig 'khri shing zhes bya des//

mu tig 'ob gsum ston par phul ba'i lan// sku las 'od 'phros ras gzhi'i steng du phog// (4)

de yi shul mnan ri mor bzhengs pa de// 'od zer ma zhes 'phags yul dbus phyogs dar//

de yi bris rgyun skye mched bshad pa la// de rjes ston pa'i sku tshab brgya sbyin gyis// (5) [p. 142] bzhengs pa'i dgung lo nyer lnga'i tshad de la// ras kyis bkab nas spar du legs [=len?] pa yi//

bris rgyun bal yul phyogs nas bod du dar// de ni cung zad sgros mi gtsang bar bshad// (6)

da lta'i dus kyi ri mo'i bris rgyun de// 'jam dbyangs sprul pa rgya nag yul 'khrungs pa'i//

phyag bris si thang rgya m[dz]ad chen mo dang// bod kyis lha bris rno ba [=rdo pa] bkras rgyal la// (7)

slob dpon rang las slob ma mkhas pa gnyis// si thang rgya bris mdzad mkhan skye ba ni//

steng [=lho] brag sman thang nas 'khrungs sman bla zhes// gangs [=gong] dkar stod phyogs nas kyi mkhyen pa [=brtse] yi// (8)

bris rgyun sman lugs [143] mkhyen bris gnyis su dar// gtsang stod sprul sku byi'u pa yi lugs//

phan tshun cung zad mi mthun lugs gsum po// gangs can ljongs su sngon dus legs pa'i tshe// (9)

skya ris tshad ldan bris pa'i ri mo la// sa stong ri mo'i bkod pa bris pa dang//

lugs gcig ri mo gang yang ma 'dres pa// gzhi la 'bru tshon hang tshon ltar byugs nas// (10)

sku sha dang ni spyan dbye ma gtogs sa [=pa?]// gzhan dag skya ris gsal por gzhags pa la//

sa gzhi spang shun nam mkha' mthing shun gyis// gser ris rgyal po [=rgyas pa or gsal po?] sman thang lugs su grags// (11)

na bza'i sul nyung sku byi'u lugs su [144] bshad// ri mo sna tshogs gzugs 'gris [='gros?] mtha' dag gis//

brgyan pa'i bkod mdzes phra la mang ba ni// sprul sku byi'u pa yi lugs zhes brjod// (12)

lha sku'i rgyan mang mdzes sdug phul phyin pa//
sku yi rnam 'gyur gar dang 'gyings stabs dang//
na bza'i lhab lhub bdud sprin me rlung dang//
gzugs 'gros dpa' bkra [=pa tra] me tog mtsho rlabs dang// (13)

ljon shing bya dang ri dwags mi gzugs nyams// yul ljongs brag ri g.ya' gangs nyams//
chu babs nor bu la sogs rnam 'gyur gyis// nyams dang 'gyur ba mang pos yid 'phrog ma'i// (14)

gangs ljongs mdzes pa'i rgyan du shar ba lta'i//
mig la bdud rtsi ster ba'i ya mtshan 'di//
sman gsar chos dbyings rgya mtsho'i thugs mtshon las// 'khrungs pa lha mi kun dga'i khrim [=khrom?] ston las [=lags?]// (15)

gzhan yang sprul sku 'phreng kha ba dang ni// lho brag sprul sku nor bu rgya mtsho dang//
kong po'i sprul sku lab smyon dpal shod kyi//
mdzad dkon mchog e yul la mdzes pa skyid// (16)

kong po'i bla ma smin gling chos bzang sogs//
mkhas pa'i phyag rgyun mig gi bdud rtsi ste//

lho 'dir zhabs drung thog mar byon pa'i dus// 'jam dbyangs dpal ldan rgya mtsho'i phyag bzhes dang// (17)

sprul sku 'brug bstan 'dzin kyi slob ma la// gdung mkhar slob dpon 'brug bsam 'grub dang ni//

kha ling slob dpon bstan 'dzin rnam pa gnyis// de rjes a 'grod nor bu don 'grub rnams// (18)

lho 'dir ri mo legs pa'i phyag rgyun te// 'brug zhung du ri byang chub sems dpa' zhes//
sngon dus rnam 'gyur mkhas par 'jog pa lags// (19)

Appendix K

The Account Given by W. D. Shakabpa

The following account of Tibetan art history by W. D. Shakabpa (1976) (Zhwa-sgab-pa dBang-phyug-bde-ldan) appeared in his political history of Tibet, *Bod kyi srid don rgyal rabs*, vol. 1, pp. 105–115. This summarizes the traditional sources and adds much additional information. Additions given here within braces were originally footnotes in the Tibetan text.

snga dus bod la bris 'bur la mkhas pa mang po zhig byung yod pa'i nang nas/ phyis ri mo'i bris char tshad du byed pa ni/ rdo pa bkras rgyal dang/ yar stod byi'u sgang pa/ rdo pa bkras rgyal gyi slob ma lho brag sman thang pa sman bla don grub dang/ gong dkar sgang stod mkhyen brtse/ gzhan yang sprul sku chos dbyings rgya mtsho dang/ bla ma sangs rgyas lha dbang/ karma pa bcu pa chos dbyings rdo rje sogs yin pas de dag lo dus nam byung/ ri mo'i rnam dbye sogs la cung zad zhib pa/

de yang lha bzo mkhas [p. 106] pa bkras rgyal zhes par slob ma slob dpon las mkhas pa gnyis byung ba/ lho brag sman thang du sman bla don grub klong rdol gsung 'bum ma 7b.6 par sman bla don grub rgya mtsho gsungs/ 'khrungs pa dang mnyam du sman thang gi mtshal kha yang thon/ na thog tshar ba dang/ rang gi chung ma dang ma mthun par yul khyar nas byon pa yar 'brog stag lung du pir snod dang/ bris dpe zhig rnyed pas bris la blo kha phyogs/ gtsang sa skya sogs la bris shes e yod la phyin mthar rdo pa bkras rgyal dang thug pas ri mo gsan mkhyen gyi tshul mdzad/ rang gi skye ba sngon ma rgya nag tu 'khrungs dus bris pa'i si thang rgya mdzad [sic] chen mor grags pa de gzigs tsam gyis sngon gnas rjes dran gyi tshul bstan pa'i rgya bris dang nye ba'i ldan lugs kyi ri mo thugs la bkra lam gyis shar/ rgyud sde gnyis dang bstun sku gzugs kyi cha tshad yid bzhin nor bu zhes pa'i yig cha yang mdzad/ g.ya' sel 255a.1 ces gsal ba sman thang pa'i lo dus gsham nas ra 'phrod byung ba ltar rtsis pas rdo pa bkras rgyal ni rab 'byung bdun pa'i nang la byung ba sems dgos shing/ sman bla don grub ni rgyal mchog dge 'dun grub pa'i sku tshe'i dkyil tsam mam/ spyi lo 1440 nang byung 'dug cing/ lo rgyus la lar sman thang pa khu dbon zhes dang/ la lar sman thang pa yab sras zhes thon 'dug pa khu dbon zer ba ni khu bo sman bla don grub dang/ dbon po sman thang pa zhi ba 'od ces pa zhwa dmar bzhi pas shing 'brug 1484 lor lho 'brug nas sras mkhar du phebs skabs lha khang la zhabs tog ngan par gzigs te gzim chung du skyes mchog 'khor bcas dang/ sngags sku rnams sman thang pa zhi ba 'od 'brir 'jug tshul gsal ba dang/ sras ni sman thang pa 'jam dbyangs zhu ba de yin pas rim pas gsham du gsal zhing/

rdo pa bkras rgyal gyi slob ma mkhyen brtse chen mo yang/ rab byung brgyad pa'i nang gong dkar 'phring ru sgang stod thod dkar du 'khrungs shing/ gong dkar rdo rje gdan gyi ldebs bris phal [p. 107] che ba yang khong gi phyag bris yin par grags/

de yang/ zhwa dmar bzhi pa chos grags rgya mtsho'am/ chos grags ye shes (1453–1524) nas rab byung brgyad pa'i chu phag 1503 lor yangs pa can gyi dgon pa phyag btab pa'i skabs su/ steng 'og thams cad kyi ri mo'i bkod pa khyad par can

rnams sman thang pa don grub yab sras dang/ mkhyen brtse pas bris karma kaṃ tshang brgyud pa'i rnam thar rab 'byams nor bu zla ba chu shel phreng ba 311b.6 zhes gsal ba dang/ de ka'i mu 'thud du/ mdun gyi ne'u thang la gos sku'i tshad kyi ras bkram pa'i steng/ sman thang pa 'jam dbyangs pas gos chen gyi lham gyon/ lag tu sol pir yu ba can bzung bas thub chen gyi sku bris te tshon yig btab nas ji lta ba gos chen kha mdog so sor dras nas bsgrigs pa'i gos sku khyad par can bzhengs/ zhes gsal ba dang/

'brug pa kun mkhyen padma dkar po'i (1527–1592) rang rnam du'ang sgyu ma chen po'i zlos gar 83b.6 dang 88b.5 gong dkar rdo rje gdan nas mkhyen brtse dbon po rgyud la dogs gcod du rkang gtad slebs pa la chos dang/ dogs gcod kyi re ba bskangs/ zhes dang/ mar tsam na/ bsam grub rtser sku mdun zhing/ (zhing shag pa tshe brtan rdo rje) gis 'bod mir sman thang pa 'jam dbyangs dpal brdzang byung/ zhes gsal bar gzhigs tshe sman bla don grub dang/ dbon po zhi ba 'od/ don grub kyi sras 'jam dbyangs/ gong dkar mkhyen brtse chen mo si tu'i rang rnam dri bral shel gyi me long 45b nang sgang stod mkhyen brtses bris skus ma tshad/ 'jim pa'i sku bzo ba la mkhas pa yin zhes gsungs/ bcas skabs de tsam la byung ba dang/ ri mo yang sman ris (e ris) dang/ mkhyen ris (gzhung ris) zhes bzhed srol tsam las/ don la gnyis ka rdo pa bkras rgyal gyi slob mar brten ri mo'i gzhung ni sman ris yin kyang/ zur khyad phran bu re yod tshul ni/ bdag gis skyabs rje yongs 'dzin khri byang rdo rje 'chang chen por ri mo'i bris tshugs skor zhu yig phul ba'i bka' lan du/ sman bla don grub kyis/ dus [p. 108] 'khor dang/ sdom 'byung gi rgyud rtsa 'grel sogs kyi rjes su 'brangs nas sku gzugs kyi tshad rab tu byed pa yid bzhin nor bu bya ba sa gcad bdun gyis gtan la phab pa mdzad de/ de las dar ba rnams la sman lugs zhes grags/ yang gong dkar sgang stod nas mkhyen brtse chen mo zhes pa'i lha bris mkhas pa byon te de ni sman thang pa dang/ ri mo'i lugs cung mi mthun 'dra bas mkhyen lugs zhes grags pa dang/ gzhan yang yar stod du 'khrungs pa sprul sku byi'u sgang pa zhes mkhas pa zhig gis rgyun sman mkhyen gnyis dang/ ri mo'i srol cung mi mthun pa bcas lugs srol gsum du gyes/ zhes phebs pa dang/ rgyal mchog lnga pa chen pos rdo rje 'phreng ba'i thang sku bzhengs gnang skabs zhi ba'i rigs rnams sman thang pa'i lag rgyun dang/ khro bo dang/ dkyil 'khor gyi rigs mkhyen brtse'i lag rgyun legs tshul gyis bris 'jug gnang gsal 'dug pa nas sman mkhyen gnyis dbar bris tshugs cung zad mi 'dra ba yod pa dang/

yang/ yar stod byi'u sgang pa ni/ phal cher rab byung bzhi pa dang/ lnga pa'i nang byung ba zhig min nam snyam/ khong gi lo rgyus zhib pa ma brnyed kyang/ sa skya dang/ shel dkar/ byang ngam ring/ rdzong kha sogs la byi'u sgang pa'i bris zhes jo bo yab sras dang/ sa skya paṇḍi ta/ tshe dpag med/ kun rig/ mgon po ber dang/ zhal/ lha mo'i zhal thang bris rnying 'dra mjal ba dang/ lhag par rgyal rtse dpal 'khor chos sder sa zla'i dus chen skabs 'grems gshom byed pa'i spyan ras gzigs kyi gos sku de dang/ sku 'bum nang gi ldebs ris kun tu bzang po gtso 'khor sogs phal cher bal bris 'dra ba la/ gtso lha che zhing/ lha mgron rnams ri mig gam/ sgo khyim chung ngu'i nang bzhugs pa/ tshon li khri shas che la/ na bza' sogs la gser ris zhib cha che ba/ khro bo rnams bong thung ba/ dbu dang/ sus pa che ba/ sku mdog mthing nag yin tshe dpyad dkar po'am/ sngo sangs kyis 'then pa/ rus pa'i rgyan drug la zhib tshags ha cang che ba zhig yod/ bo dong dpal ldan chos [p. 109] kyi rgyal mtshan phyogs las rnam rgyal 1376–1451 phyag ris la shin tu mkhas pas dpal sa ra ha'i bris sku 'gran zla dang bral ba zhig yod pa sa skya'i nang rten la bzhugs par grags pa de bzhin bal bris byi'u sgang pa'i bris tshugs lta bur yod tshul thos/

'gro mgon chos rgyal 'phags pa'i (1235–1280) slob ma tsha ba rong pa bsod nams 'od zer zhu ba rten gsum bzhengs pa la shin tu mkhas pa zhig byung ba des sku rten bzhengs tshul yon tan 'byung gnas zhes bya ba zhig dang/ gzhan yang bu ston thams cad mkhyen pa/ brag nag pa/ stag tshang lo tsā ba shes rab rin chen sogs kyis lha sku dang/ mchod rten sogs kyi cha tshad yig cha mang po mdzad yod pa dang/ sde dge dge bshes bstan 'dzin phun tshogs zhes bzo rig pa'i gnas kun la byang chub pa zhig byung ba khong gis rig pa bzo'i gnas kyi las tshogs 'dod dgu'i pra phab ces pa zhig kyang mdzad yod/ rgyal mchog gsum pa bsod nams rgya mtsho'i (1543–1588) sku dus sprul sku 'phreng kha ba dpal ldan blo gros bzang po zhes sman lugs ri mor shin tu mkhas grags zhig

byung ba khong gis lha sku'i cha tshad mdo rgyud gsal ba'i me long zhes pa zhig kyang gsungs yod/ klong rdol bla ma rin po ches sprul sku ri mkhar ba dang/ sprul sku 'phreng kha ba klong rdol gsung ma 7a.6 zhes so sor gsungs kyang/ a khu shes rab rgya mtshos/ gtsang stod rta nag ri mkhar sprul sku 'phreng kha ba dpal ldan blo gros bod kyi dpe rgyun dkon pa'i dpe tho zhes gcig rang yin pa lta bu gsungs 'dug pas zhib 'jug byed dgos 'dug/

... rgyal mchog lnga pa chen po'i (1617–1682) sku dus lho brag bstan 'dzin nor bu dang/ zur chen chos dbyings rang grol/ sna rtse stag lung dpal mgon dang/ sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtshos rgyal ba'i 'khrungs rabs smad byung skal pa ma gra tshar bris mkhan dbu chen sman thang pa mgon po tshe dbang/ pho brang phun tshogs/ lha sa rags kha ba 'jam dbyangs dbang po [p. 110] sogs ri mor mkhas grags tshang ma sman lugs yin par bzhed cing/ sprul sku chos dbyings rgya mtsho zhu ba'i ri mo mkhas pa de yang/ phal cher mkhyen ris dang/ sman ris gnyis su med pa zhig gi thog/ skabs re bzo khyad dpe gsar dag kyang gnang gi yod pa 'dra zhing/ khong ni rgyal mchog lnga pa chen po'i sku dus byung zhing/ po tā la'i tshoms chen gyi logs bris su bod du 'gro ba mi byung tshul dang/ ... rgyal ba'i 'khrungs rabs rnams sprul sku chos dbyings rgya mtsho sogs kyis bris pa dang/ bka' 'gyur lha khang du lam rim bla brgyud bris rtsis la ma dpe byi'u'i ri mo zhig gtad pa'i de lugs kyis bris 'dug pa/ sprul sku ba rnams ma goms pa'i skyon gyis lugs gnyis gang la'ang ma gtogs pa'i bris gsar byung du kū la'i gos bzang ka 142a zhes gsal bas sman mkhyen gnyis las zur khyad cig gnang ste kar bris kyi srol de mdzad pa min nam snyam yang kar bris skor zhib cha rim pas 'og tu gsal zhing/ paṇ chen blo bzang chos rgyan gyi rang rnam du/ sprul sku chos dbyings rgya mtsho zhu ba'i pir thog mkhan pos shing bya 1645 dben dgon nyams gso'i log bris dang/ me phag 1647 bkra shis lhun por rgyal ba blo bzang don grub dang/ mkhas grub sangs rgyas ye shes kyi rnam thar rang gi spyod tshul gsal ba ston pa 134b.1 ras bris rnams bris zhes gsal/

bla ma sangs rgyas lha dbang ni/ ... skyabs rje yongs 'dzin khri byang rdo rje 'chang chen por dgongs skor zhus pa'i bka' lan du/ karma pa brgyad pa mi bskyod rdo rje'i (1507–1550) dngos slob tu gyur zhing/ sman lugs rnying ma'i ri mo'i rjes 'brang bla ma sangs rgyas lha dbang zhes ldan khog tu byung zhing/ de'i snying slob lta bur lha bzo rta mgrin mgon po sogs byung zhes phebs pa dang/ 'bras ljongs rum steng dgon du karma grwa tshang gi mkhan po phra mgu rin po cher kar bris skor bka' dri zhus par/ karma sgar bris sam/ kar bris ni/ karma pa brgyad pa mi bskyod rdo rjes ri mo'i thig rtsa nyi ma [p. 111] chen po zhes pa mdzad cing/ bcu pa chos dbyings rdo rje phyag bris legs pas rgya dkar nag gi bris las shing dang/ me tog/ khang bzang sogs dpe bzhes te karma sgar bris sam/ kar bris zhes pa'i srol mdzad pa min nam bsams kyi yod pa dang/ de yang kar bris dang/ gzhung bris kyi dbye ba ni/ kar bris kyi zhi ba rnams zhal dang/ spyan chung bas zhi nyams che zhing/ gzhung bris kyi zhi ba rnams zhal dang spyan che bas khro nyams cung zad yod tshul brjod srol yod ces gsungs byung bar brten karma pa brgyad pa mi bskyod rdo rje'i rnam thar du zhib skabs ri mo'i skor zhib pa zhal ma gsal yang/ bcu pa chos dbyings rdo rje (1604–1674) dgung lo chung dus nas phyag bris legs po yod pa'i thog/ lho brag chu khyer gyi sprul sku tshe ring la sman rnying gi ri mo gsan sbyong mdzad/ bod yul du si thang las snga ba klu mes kyi thugs dam rten yer pa rwa ba mar grags pa'i gnas bcu'i bris thang dang/ si'u spyan ras gzigs sems nyid ngal gso'i sku thang/ snar thang du mchims nam mkha' grags kyis 'phags pa'i gnas brtan bcu drug gdugs tshod du spyan drangs pa'i lugs kyi gnas bcu sogs la dpe mdzad de bris thang shin tu mang po phyag bris mdzad pa dang/ rgya nag dang nye ba'i 'jang yul sogs su yun ring bzhugs te rgya bris dang nye ba'i ri mo'i bris srol mdzad pa'i lo rgyus dang/ rgyal rong tsha ko rgyal pos gdan drangs/ 'bo gangs dkar du 'brug lo'i lo gsar gnang/ skabs der rje 'dis snyan ngag dang/ ri mo'i 'bri ba ni bod yul du kho bo las lhag pa mi yong/ kho bo spyan ras gzigs dgyes pa'i mi zhig yin/ 'dzam bu'i gling 'dir ri mo bri bar 'ongs pa yin rab 'byams nor bu zla ba chu shel 'phreng ba 184a.7 gsungs pa sogs phyag bris mkhas pa'i zhal bzhes gnang 'dug pa nas karma sgar bris sam/ kar bris ni bris mkhan gzhan nas mdzad pa'i yig cha'i khungs skyel ma byung phyin/ rje 'di pas srol gtod mdzad par cha 'jog byed thub bam snyam/ chos dbyings rdo rje'i

phyag bris mtshan byang 'khod pa'i mi la bzhad pa rdo rje dang/ tshe ring [p. 112] mched lnga'i zhal thang bris rnying chung ngu gnyis lho brag nyi lde dgon gyi nang rten du bzhugs pa de dang/ bar lam ldi li'i bod khang nang/ gnas nang dpa' bo rin po che'i rten gras grub thob brgyad bcu'i zhal thang kar bris 'gran zla med pa zhig mjal ba/ de tshor sa stong che zhing/ yul ljongs dang/ ri dang nags tshal sogs mang la/ gser bris zhib tshags che ba dang/ tshon phal che ljang shas dang/ skya shas che bas mjal tsam nyid nas sman lugs dang dbye ba lam seng 'byed thub pa zhig yod/

kun mkhyen 'jam dbyangs bzhad pas mdo smad bkra shis 'khyil du/ shing khyi 1715 lor bkra shis sgo mang gi chos sde chen po phyag btab pa'i tshe khang bzo'i rdo shing dang/ rten bzhengs kyi bzo bo mkhas pa rnams dbus gzhung la skyabs zhus kyis gtong gnang mdzad khongs lha bris mkhas pa bde chen gsang sngags mkhar pa'i tshe 'phel zer ba zhig byung ste des mdo smad a mdo rib gong khul du sman lugs kyi bris rgyun spel khyab byas yod pa dang/ bya btang tshogs drug rang grol gyi lha bris slob dpon gling rgya'i lha bzo bstan pa dar rgyas zhes skad grags can zhig byung ba dang/ rgyal mchog dgu pa'i sku dus mdo smad rnga pa dang/ 'gu log khul du lha bris mkhas pa gur khu dbon zhes skad grags can zhig kyang byung ba'i lo rgyus 'dug/ bar skabs lha bris mkhas pa 'bras spungs klu 'bum dge bshes/ rgyal rtse lcog ro nas khyung pa/ kha sar zur 'phyongs dbu chen zam gdong skal bzang/ skas gdung dbu mdzad/ 'phags lha'i dkon gnyer ye shes rgya mtsho/ dga' gling shar dpal 'byor/ dpal 'byor rgya mtsho [sic!]/ chab mdo phur bu lha bzo dang/ tshe dpag lha bzo sogs bris pa skad grags can mang po byung ba red/ bris sku'i cha tshad kyi skor la byang bdag pa rnam rgyal grags bzang/ sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho/ jo nang tā ra nā tha/ si tu chos kyi 'byung gnas/ kong sprul yon tan rgya mtsho sogs nas kyang mdzad yod pa so so'i gsung 'bum la gzigs na mkhyen par 'gyur ro//

bod nang bzos pa li ma'i sku che shos shig ni mnga' bdag 'od srung [p. 113] gis bzhengs si tu bstan pa'i nyin byed kyi rang rnam dri bral shel gyi me long 65b.2 pa'i sne gdong bya sa'i rnam snang thog tshad gnyis ma de yin nam snyam/ de lug mkhan bzo bo'i ming sogs ma shes kyang/ lug blug yul ni shel brag gi rgyab ri der thab rgyab shul dang/ lug kong sogs kyi shul gnas bshad du shod srol yod/ bka' gdams gdung rten phal che ba jo bo rje'i (982–1054) sku dus tsam la rgya gar shar nub nas byung zhing/ 'brom ston rgyal ba'i 'byung gnas kyi dngos slob spyan snga ba tshul khrims 'bar gyis jo bo'i 'bral spang pad spungs la dpe mdzad de rin po che 'ba' zhig las bal po dang/ bod kyi bzo bo mang pos bos nas li ma'i bka' gdams gdung rten grangs las 'das pa bzhengs/ ....

[The long account of sacred sculpture continues until p. 115.]

Ethnic Map of Tibet

Key to the Map of Ethnic Tibet

The map indicates *approximate* locations for most of the important districts, towns, and monasteries mentioned in the text. It is based ultimately on the cartographic work of Peter Kessler (copyright now with the Tibet Institute, Rikon, Switzerland) and has been adapted from the map that appeared in Graham Coleman, ed., *A Handbook of Tibetan Culture* (London: Rider, 1993), pp. 28–33. Please note that all "borders" are nothing but highly approximate indications of ethnic (not political) boundaries. For the convenience of non-specialists, place names have been listed here in Roman alphabetical order and not following the traditional Tibetan order. Note that place names on the map itself in most places do not indicate the Tibetan spelling, but only a rough phonetic rendering.

A-khro 101. A community in sGa-pa, northwest Khams.
Alchi 2. Village and old monastery in Ladakh.
A-mdo. Major region of northeast Tibet.
Amdo. Same as A-mdo.
A-mdo rGyal-rong 134. Same as rGyal-rong.
A-mdo rNga-pa 144. District in southern A-mdo.
'Ba' Gling dKar-shis-pa 129. Place in 'Ba'-thang district of Khams.
'Ba'-thang 141.
'Ban-chen dgon-pa 105. Monastery in sGa-pa district, Khams.
'Ban-tshang 7. Community in Dol-po, northwest Nepal.
bDud-'dul-sbug, in Sakya 29.
'Ben-chen dgon-pa 105. Same as 'Ban-chen dgon-pa, monastery in sGa-pa district, Khams.
bKra-shis-'khyil 148. Major monastery in A-mdo.
bKra-shis-lhun-po 40. Major monastery outside Shigatse in gTsang.
'Bo Gangs-dkar 137. Famous mountain and monastery in Mi-nyag, eastern Khams.
Brag-g.yab 126. District southeast of Chamdo in Khams.
'Bras-spungs 69. Major monastery near Lhasa to the northwest.
'Bras-yul rDzong-dkar 49. In Rin-spungs district, eastern gTsang.
'Bri-gung 79. District and monastery northeast of Lhasa in dBus.
'Bri-gung-pa rTse. Place in 'Bri-gung district.
bSam-grub-rtse 38. Old name of Shigatse.
bSam-yas 80. Ancient site in Lho-kha southeast of Lhasa.
'Bum-mo-che, in rGyang 30.
Byams-pa-gling 88.
Chab-mdo 120. Also spelled "Chamdo," a town and district west of Derge in Khams.
'Chad-kha. Place in the southern dBus borderlands.
Chos-'khor rGyal. A temple near Lhasa.
Co-ne 145.
Darjeeling 26.
Dar-rtse-mdo 136.
dBus. Central region of Tibet containing the capital, Lhasa.
Derge 121. District of Khams.
dGa'-ldan 78. Major dGe-lugs-pa monastery in dBus.
dKar-shod 115. Better known as Kar-shod. Area in northern Chamdo district, Khams.
Dolpo 7. District in northwest Nepal.
Dol-po 7. Same as Dolpo.
Dol-po Ting-kyu 8. A community in Dolpo.
dPal-'khor-bde-chen 44. Same as dPal-'khor-chos-sde.
dPal-'khor-chos-sde 44. Monastic complex in Gyantse, gTsang.
dPal-spungs 123.
dPal-spungs Thub-bstan-chos-'khor-gling 123. Karma bka'-brgyud monastery in Khams south of Derge.
dPal-yul 125A.
Drikung 79. Same as 'Bri-khung.
Dwags-po 96.
'Dzi-sgar 118. Place in 'Jo-mda' district, Khams.
E 95.
E-waṃ-chos-ldan 37. Same as Ngor E-waṃ-chos-ldan.
Gangs-can 35.
Gangtok 28. Capital of Sikkim.
gDan-sa Thel 81.
Glang-thang 72.
Gling-shis Byang-mkhar-dgon 111.
Gling-shis Ya-po-dgon 111.
Gling-tshang 111.
Glo-bo 12. District in northwest Nepal.
Glo-bo Chu-mig-brgya-rtsa (Muktinath) 13.
Glo-bo Ge-gar 10. Old monastery southwest of sMon-thang in Glo-bo.
Glo-bo sMon-thang 11
gNam-mtsho 67. Large lake in nomadic region north of Lhasa.
gNas-gsar 48.
gNas-nang 68.
gNas-rnying 45. Locale north of Gyantse town in Gyantse district, gTsang.
'Go-log 143. Nomadic region between Khams and A-mdo.
Go-'jo 127. District in Khams east of Brag-g.yab.
Gong-dkar 87A. District of Lho-kha, southern dBus.
Gong-dkar chos-sde 87A. Monastery at Gong-dkar.

Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan 87A. Same as Gong-dkar chos-sde.
Gong-dkar sGang-stod 87A. Locale in Gong-dkar.
Gong-dkar-stod 87A. Same as Gong-dkar sGang-stod.
Grwa 87. Side valley south of the Brahmaputra River in Lho-ka.
Grwa Byams-pa-gling 87.
Grwa Chos-gling 87.
Grwa lDing-po-che 87.
Grwa-thang 87.
gSer-mdog-can 51.
gTsang. Region of Tibet between dBus and mNga'-ris.
gTsang-po. Brahmaputra River in Tibet.
gTsang-rong 50.
gTsang-stod rTa-nag-pa 34.
Gu-ge 5. District of mNga'-ris in western Tibet.
Guge 5. Same as Gu-ge.
'Gu-log 143. Same as 'Go-log.
Gung-thang 14. District of eastern mNga'-ris in western Tibet.
Gung-thang (rDzong-dkar) chos-sde 14.
g.Yag-sde 84. A place near sNye-mo, eastern gTsang.
Gyantse 44. Same as rGyal-rtse, district of gTsang.
g.Ye 95. Same as E.
g.Ye-dmar 47.
g.Yung 52.
Helambu 17. District in Sherpa region of Nepal.
Hemis, Ladakh 4
Hor-khog-lnga 131. The five districts of Hor-khog in Khams.
Iwang 47.
'Jang-yul 139. Likiang, a border region of Yunnan, home of the Nakhi people.
Jo-khang. Central shrine of Lhasa.
'Jo-mda' 119. District of Khams between Derge and Chamdo.
Jo-nang 33.
Jo-nang Phun-tshogs-gling 33.
Jo-nang rTag-brtan-phun-tshogs-gling 33.
Kaḥ-thog 125.
Kaḥ-thog monastery 125.
Kalimpong 27.
Karma 115.
Karma-dgon 115. Important Karma bka'-brgyud-pa monastery in northern Chamdo district of Khams.
Karma Lha-steng-pa 115.
Karma monastery 115. Same as Karma-dgon.
Kar-shod 115.
Kar-shod Ma-yol 115.
Khams. Southeast region of Tibet.
Khams-pa-sgar 112.
Khams-pa-sgar Thub-bstan-phun-tshogs-gling 112.
Kho-char 6. Monastery in Pu-hrangs, mNga'-ris.
Kong-po 82A. District in southeast dBus.
Ladakh. District of western mNga'-ris, now under Indian rule.
Lama Yuru, Ladakh 1.
La-stod. Western gTsang.
La-stod Byang 20. District of western gTsang with Ngam-ring as its seat.
La-stod Lho. District of western gTsang including Ding-ri and Shel-dkar. 22–23
La-stod Shel-dkar 23.
lCags-la 135.
lCang-rwa 43. Place just west of Gyantse.
lDan chos-sde 107.
lDan-khog 107.
lDan-ma 107.
lDan-shod 109.
lDing-po-che 86.
Lha rGya-ri 94.
Lha-rtse 31.
Lha-rtse rdzong 31.
Lhasa. Capital of Tibet, in dBus region.
Lha-sa. Same as Lhasa.
Lha-sa bar-skor. Intermediate circumambulation path in Lhasa.
Lha-steng 115.
Lha-stengs 115.
Lha-thog 116.
Lha-thog Khams-pa-sgar 112.
Lho-brag 56. A district of southern dBus bordering on Bhutan.
Lho-brag Chu-'khyer 57. Locale in southwest Lho-brag district of southern dBus, very near Bhutan.
Lho-brag Lha-lung 56. Locale in northwest Lho-brag district of Lho-kha.
Lho-brag Nyi-lde-mgon 56.
Lho-brag sMan-lung 55.
Lho-brag sMan-thang 55. Locale in northeast Lho-brag district of southern dBus.
Lho-brag Sras-mkhar-dgu-thog 56.
Lho Karma-dgon 115.
Lho-kha rDo 80.
Lho-kha Yar-lung 91.
Lo Mustang 11.
Mang-yul 14. District in eastern of mNga'-ris.
mDo-smad rNga-pa 144.
mDzo-nyag grong-pa 103.
Mi-li 138.
Mi-nyag 136.
Mi-nyag Dar-rtse-mdo 136.
mNga'-ris. Westernmost Tibet.
mNyes-thang 64.
Mon 97.
mThong-smon 74. An estate in 'Phan-po.
mTshur-phu 65. Important Karma bka'-brgyud-pa monastery in sTod-lung district of dBus, northwest of Lhasa.
Na-lendra 72.
Nang-chen 114.
Narthang 36. Same as sNar-thang.
Ngam-ring 21.
Ngam-rings 21.
Ngom gNas-mdo dgon-pa in Khams 120A.
Ngor 37.
Nor-bu-gling-kha. Summer Palace in Lhasa.
Nyag-rong 132.
Nyang-stod 46.
Nyi-lde-dgon (in Lho-brag) 56.
'Og-min Karma 115. Same as Karma-dgon.
'Og-min Karma-dgon 115. Same as Karma-dgon.
'Ol-kha 82.
Paro, Bhutan 61.
'Phan-po 74. The district north of Lhasa.
'Phan-po Na-lendra 72. Monastery in 'Phan-po district north of Lhasa.
Phari, Bhutan 59.
Pho-brang rGyal-mtshan-mthon-po 40. Palace in Tashilhunpo.


MONGOLIA
Kamcu
Lingchu
BANAG
ARIG
Huangho
PARI
HVAIDAM
Tajinär
Gashun
146
147
148
149
Tsghan
Khoto
TSONG KHA
KANSU
Lanchou
Gacu
Shing Kun
LABRANG
TRIKHA
AMDO
'BAL
RONGPO
Chumar Dzong
GYARMOTHANG
145
Minchu
Drichu
Rabd-un
Drichu
Chumar-ri
100
Machu
ARIG
DZOGE
SERTHANG
THEBO
Ziko'u
DRONGPA-TO
Dunkho
GOLOK
NGOKHO
101
143
NGAPA
Jangla
GYAHOR
Sera Dzong
102
103
GA
104
SHARPA
144
Adza Sumdo
Khyergomdo
105
107
SE-THA
SOMANG
106
108
109
111
NANGCHEN
112
110
TRICHU
Nangchen Gar
113
114
116
121
122
DERGE
115
LHATHO
122A
130
134
Drachen
NUBHOR
117
118
123
TREHOR
DZI-KHO
RABTAM
WASU
JANG
Chu Dzong
NAGSHOD
119
124
131
GYALMORONG
Khyungpo
125
Chengdu
Gyashu
120
125A
Ta'u
Senge Dzong
MUPING
KHA
NGOM
133
120A
127
132
Lhari
Alamdo
126
127A
128
CAGLA
Lho Dzong
TSAWA
KHAM
129
LITHANG
MINYAK
135
79
PO-YUL
141
136
Zhokha
Chumdo
Tashitse
MARKHAM
Lithang
137
CHINA
KONGPO
Jomo
'BA'
MOLASHOG
82
82A
PEMAKO
SERURONG
81
KA-YUL
93
DVAGPO
DZA-YUL
94
95
96
98
'JOL
CHATING
GANGKARLING
MILI
KHA
JA-YUL
TARONG
KHYNARONG
CHANGYAK
138
Min Dzong
TINGTSHO
Sadiya
GYETHANG
Bombdila
ASSAM
139
140
Yangtse
Irawaddi
Salween
Mekong
BURMA
Tali
YUNNAN

TURKESTAN
Yarkand
Charkhlik
Khargalik
Cherchen
LI-YUL
Khotan
lgit
K2
BALTI
AKSAI CHIN
LADAKH
NGARI
Kargil
1
3
PURIG
2
Leh
4
ZANGSKAR
Padum
Rutog
JANGTA
TIBET
Chamba
usie
Kyelang
Dharamsala
NYUNGTI
GUGE
Gar Dzong
Mandi
Pu
Sutlej
KHUNU
Simla
Tsaparang
5
BONGTHOL
Khyunglung
Ambala
Mussorie
Dehra
PURANG
KHRITE
Purang (Takalot)
6
Almora
NAGTSHANG
Drongpa (Tradun)
Saga
7
8
DOLPO
9
Jumla
Delhi
Tsangpo
TSA
THOBGYAL
MUS
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Lhatse
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NEPAL
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Sakya
29
Kyirong
TINGRI
Tingkye
15
16
Pokhara
Nyalam
24
G
17
18
Agra
ipur
Kathmandu
28
25
Lucknow
26
27
INDIA
Ganges
100
200 MILES
SCALE

Inscriptions

Here I would like to present the inscriptions of the five thangkas illustrated above as plates 59, 60, 62 and 63 and Fig. 140.

Pl. 59. Episodes from the life of the Ngor abbot Klu-sdings Rin-chen-mi-'gyur-rgyal-mtshan (b. 1717), tenure 1746–1751. Thangka, ca. late 18th c., Khams, 79×58.5 cm. Collection R.R.E. The faint inscription on the back identifies this painting as the thirteenth thangka on the left in a large collection: *g.yon bcu gsum ma'o/.* The painting contains several inscriptions in golden dbu-can letters, each consisting of one four-line verse. The following could be deciphered; several were too worn to make out more than a few isolated syllables.

shar chen mkhas pa'i rigs 'khrungs sā la'i phreng//
bskyed du bsrings pa'i bsti gnas klu sdings kyi//
bla brang dga' tshal zhal 'dzam [?] rgyal sras kyi//
spyod pa dpag yas gzhan don spyad pa'i tshul//
(Birth in Shar-pa family and youth in the Klu-sdings bla-brang.)

(The first line is completely illegible.)
zhabs stegs XX XX gser khrir mnga' gsol na[s]//
[three syllables illegible] pa theg gsum chos sgra che//
mkhan chen chos kyi rgyal mtshan XX XX XX
(The verse alludes to his enthronement as Ngor abbot.)

dpal stug rtogs brjod brgya brgyad ri mo'i lam//
dang po 'dren pa tshul khrims rin chen dang//
lha dga' mched 'khor bcas pa'i sor rtse yi//
zlos gar ji ltar bsgyur nas bris pa'i tshul//
(Scene showing Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen [1697–1769] and the painters Lha-dga' and brother working on a set depicting the *dPag bsam 'khri shing* avadāna stories.)

Pl. 60. Cakrasamvara (bDe-mchog), with a lama lineage of 'Bri-gung-pa masters. Thangka, Central Tibet ('Bri-gung?), ca. late 18th or early 19th c., 58×40 cm. Private collection, Cologne.

10 8 6 4 2 1 3 5 7 9 11
21 19 17 15 13 12 14 16 18 20 22
31 29 27 25 23 24 26 28 30 32
33 34

1. rDo-rje-'chang, 2. Klu-sgrub, 3. Dril-bu-pa, 4. Dzalendhara, 5. Nag-po-spyod-pa, 6. Tillopa, 7. Naropa, 8. Karṇaripa, 9. Bla-ma rDo-rje-gdan-pa, 10. Paṇ-chen Abhaya, 11. <rTa-mi?> Sangs-rgyas-grags, 12. sKyob-pa 'Jig-rten-mgon-po [Here out of order because of his importance for the lineage; his place in the chronological succession should be after no. 14], 13. dPal-chen rGa lo-tsā-ba, 14. Phag-mo-gru-pa [1110–1170], 15. sPyan-snga Grags-pa-'byung-gnas, 16. Rin-chen-rdo-rje, 17. dBang-phyug-bsod-nams, 18. Grags-pa-shes-rab, 19. Kun-mkhyen Tshul-rgyal-grags <=Tshul-khrims-rgyal-po>, 20. Grags-pa-rdo-rje, 21. gTsang-pa <Blo-gros> bzang-po, 22. mkhan-chen Rin-chen-bzang-po, 23. rje-btsun bSod-nams mtshan-can, 24. rje-btsun sNa-tshogs-rang-

grol, 25. Chos-rgyal-phun-tshogs, 26. bKra-shis-phun-tshogs, 27. dKon-mchog-ratna, 28. Rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-grags-pa [23rd abbot of 'Bri-gung], 29. dKon-mchog-phrin-las-bzang-po [24th abbot, 1656–1719], 30. bsKur-ma-ra-dza, 31. Ngag-dbang-phrin-las, 32. dPal-ldan 'Gar-chen-pa, 33. dKon-mchog-ting-<=bstan!>-'dzin-chos-kyi-nyi-ma [27th abbot, 1755–1792], 34. dKon-mchog-ting-<=bstan!>-'dzin-phrin-las-rnam-rgyal [28th abbot, b. 1770].

Pl. 62. Padmasambhava, with episodes from his life based on the *Padma bka' thang*. Thangka, Yol-mo (Helambu), late 18th or mid 19th c.?, 77×54 cm. Private collection, Cologne. The work has a long inscription on the back:

oṃ swa sti pra dza bhya|

tshe 'od dpag med chos dbyings mkha' klong las//

rgyal kun gsung gi nyin byed hrīḥ dmar mdangs//

mtsho gling padma'i ze'u khar 'khyil ba'i bcud//

pad 'byung gsang chen bung ba'i gnyer der 'dud//

gang gi gsang gsum rin chen ri bo'i khams// srid zhi'i dbyig gi rdul grangs rjes 'gro bas// phyogs rer zhan pa'i rtogs brjod sa rdul gyis// phung por mtshar du 'dzin pa byis pa'i blo//

de phyir phyogs dus rgyal ba'i phrin las kyi// nyin byed phyogs kyi 'khor lo khyab 'bar ba'i// padma ka ra'i rnam thar nyi ma'i rdul// grangs su 'gran nus skyes bu blo ldan su//

dbyangs can sprul pa ye shes mtsho rgyal gyis// mi brjed gzungs thob ma 'ongs phyi rabs don// *padma'i bka' yis thang yig* ces bya ba// rnam thar skyes rabs rgyas pa yi ger bkod//

ma 'ongs don du rin can gter du sbas// skal ldan las 'phro u rgyan gling pa yis// yar klung shel brag padma brtsegs pa'i ngos// padma'i shel phug sgo srungs khyab 'jug gis//

thugs kha gnas drangs padma'i bka' thang gyis// snying po sbrang rtsi lta bu'i bcud 'dus nas// 'on te bstan 'gror phan bde'i zil mngar <rgyu?>n// padma'i skyes rabs rgyas pa ka shis ngos//

khungs ldan lhad bral dwangs shel me long gzugs// phyogs 'dir yid bzhin nor ltar dkon dgongs nas// **rig 'dzin 'od gsal snying po o rgyan** khos <=kho bos>// ngo mtshar rmad 'byung sgyu 'phrul mi zad pa'i// bkod pa'i rabs gsas <=gsal?> u rgyan ghu ru'i sku// rten dang brten pa'i dpe rigs 'di bzhengs dge'i// bde gshegs rig pa 'dzin gyur mkhas mchog rje// **sngags 'chang dga' rab rdo rje** mtshan 'chang ba//

gang gi sa lam bgegs grib kun zhi zhing// spang rtogs yon tan ma lus rtsal rdzogs te// myur du zag med gtan srid zin gyur cig//

pad 'byung yab yum rtsa gsum zhi khro yis// mngon sum dkyil 'khor tshom bur myur khod de// yong grol pho chen dwangs ma'i sku snyes shog// slar yang srid par sgyu 'phrul gar tshar spos// nges sangs bstan gsal 'gro la phan dang bde'i// dpal gyed rlabs chen byang chen spyod pa'i phul/ bzhed dgongs smon lam mthar phyin yongs rdzogs shog//

legs byas 'du dge'i phung po 'bras ldan dang// rgyal kun bden pa'i tshig gsung bslu med kyi// zhal bzhes bden pa dus 'dir myur bstan nas// ji bzhin smon pa'i don kun 'grub par shog// dge'o//

dus mtha'i sngags btsun rig 'dzin 'gyur med nga// lcags mo bya lor skyes nas lcags mo phag// lo ngo lnga bcu nga gcig 'dus shar tshe// u rgyan padma'i rnam thar thang ka 'dis//

drin chen pha ma'i drin lan sbyangs phyir du// ngal ba yangs nas brtson 'grus snying stobs bskyed// lhag bsam rnam dkar dag pa'i 'dus shes kyis// sor mo'i zlos gar 'gyur las legs bsgrubs shing// rnam thar 'di bzhengs dge ba'i phan yon gyis// bdag sogs pha ma sems can ma lus kun// pad 'byung thugs kyi snang ba rgyas gyur nas// 'og min zangs mdog dpal ri'i pho brang du//

u rgyan padma'i zhabs drung skye bar shog// skyes nas gzhan don dpag med 'grub par shog// skye 'chi gnyis spangs khyod kyis byin brlobs gyis// bdag gi smon lam gang btab 'grub par shog//

ces pa 'di yangs chen bka' drin gsum ldan gyis rtsa ba'i bla ma pha rin po che'i dgongs rdzogs su bzhengs pa'i gu ru'i 'khrungs rabs rgyas pa'i rnam thar thang ka'i rgyab byang du sngags 'chang brang pas bo'i rigs sras rig 'dzin 'gyur med rdo rje sngags 'chang gsang sngags bstan 'dzin 'od gsal snying po u rgyan phun tshogs khos <=kho bos>// lcags mo phag lo hor zla bdun pa'i tshes bcu skar ma lag sor gza' lhag pa 'grub sbyor nyin yol mo

dbyen dgon gsang sngags chos gling ljon shing gar stab 'gyur zhing bya tshogs skad snyan sgrogs pa'i gnas phun sum tshogs pa yid 'ong dbyen bzhin nyams dga' bsam gtan khang bur su bris//

dge'o// dge'o// dge'o// bkra shis// sarva mangga laṃ bha wantu/ dzā ya/ dzā ya/ su dzā ya/ bkra shis dpal 'bar dzam gling rgyan du byon/ dzā yantu//

Pl. 63. Portrait of the 8th Dalai Lama, 'Jam-dpal-rgya-mtsho (1758–1804). Thangka, Central Tibet, 19th c., 90×61.5 cm. Collection R.R.E. The embroidered label and inscription on back identifies the painting as one of the last thangkas (thirty-eighth on the left) in a very large set of thangkas depicting the guru lineage of the *Lam rim* teachings. Label: *g.yon so brgyad pa.*

Inscriptions on front under different scenes or figures:
rje btsun blo bzang dpal ldan ye shes las sdom gsum bzhes nas bstan 'gro'i don rgya cher mdzad bzhin pa// (Working for the benefit of the Doctrine and living beings after receiving the three vows from the 3rd Paṇ-chen Blo-bzang-dpal-ldan-ye-shes [1738–1790].)
rgyal ba 'di thob rgyal lta [=lha?] ri sgang du ngo mtshar ba'i ltas bsam gyis mi khyab pa dang bcas sku bltams pa// (His birth at Thob-rgyal accompanied by many marvels.)
drin can bla ma ye shes rgyal mtshan. (His kind guru Tshe-mchog-gling yongs-'dzin Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan [1713–1793]).
stobs bcu mnga' ba mnyam med zas gtsang sras// (The Buddha)
rje btsun blo bzang dpal ldan ye shes zhabs// (The venerable Blo-bzang-dpal-ldan-ye-shes.)
gangs can mgon po 'jam dpal rgya mtsho'i zhabs// ('Jam-dpal-rgya-mtsho, the 8th Dalai Lama.)
Inscription on the back, middle:
oṃ swasti/
brgyad khri bzhi stong chos kyi snying po'i don//
byang chub lam gyi rim pa ston mdzad pa'i//
rtsa brgyud bla ma thugs rje can rnams kyi//
bris sku 'di nyid mthong ba'i sems can rnams//
lam ston bshes gnyen dam pas rjes bzung ste//
nges 'byung byang sems yang dag lta ba dang//
zab lam rim gnyis nyams len 'byung ba'i rgyu//
byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i man ngag 'di//
phyogs dus kun tu dar zhing rgyas gyur te//
'gro kun lam bzang 'di yis grol gyur cig//
oṃ supratiṣṭha bazre svāhā// //

Fig 140. Sahaja Cakrasamvara. Thangka, Khams, 18th c. Private collection, Cologne. An inscription on the back of this small devotional thangka by Si-tu Paṇ-chen Chos-kyi-snang-ba includes a verse of prayer and a final line stating that he painted it in the midst of distractions:
bla ma dpal chen he ru ka// phag mo mnyam sbyor bde ba ches// tshe rabs rtag tu skyong ba dang// rdo rje'i theg la spyod gyur cig// ces pa'i bris thang 'di chos kyi snang bas rnam g.yeng bar 'bris//

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Fig. 210. Maitreya, the Coming Buddha. Modern drawing, A-mdo (rGyal-rong) style. From Amdo Jamyang ('Jam-dbyangs-blo-gsal, 1982), p. 165.